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THE GENESIS OF NAPOLEONIC IMPERIALISM

BY

HAROLD C. DEUTSCH

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF HISTORY
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



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To the Memory of
ARCHIBALD CARY COOLIDGE

PREFACE

THIS study of Napoleonic statesmanship at its zenith had its origin in a doctoral thesis presented in 1929 at Harvard University. It required a certain degree of courage, not to say presumption, to enter upon a field trod so recently and so brilliantly by such figures as Albert Sorel and Édouard Driault. Yet not even they exhausted the materials in the archives of their own country, while they tended to concentrate their attention upon the purely French side of affairs. The difference in their approach to the subject is also illustrative of how much room remains for independent conclusions.

For the use of the manuscript sources upon which this study is based I am indebted to the Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères and the Archives Nationales at Paris, and the Haus-, Hof-, und Staats-Archiv at Vienna. At the first mentioned I have examined the correspondence of the ministry with its representatives abroad, together with the communications between members of the government relating to foreign affairs. The documents bearing upon the relations of France with Austria, England, Bavaria, Baden, and Württemberg have been used in their entirety. The bulk of the correspondence between the French and Prussian governments having been compiled by Paul Bailleu in the *Publikationen des Preussischen Staatsarchivs*, I found it possible to omit much of it as found at the Quai d'Orsay. The materials dealing directly with Russia have also been submitted to a less exhaustive investigation, for the greater portion of those most significant for this study are duplicated elsewhere. Thus the correspondence between France and Russia concerning their common mediation in the matter of the German indemnities is found under ALLEMAGNE, while the documents relating to Russia's attempt to mediate between France and England after the rupture of the Peace of Amiens are filed under ANGLETERRE. I have also had occasion to note that the communications between France and certain

of the secondary states of Europe are frequently more informative of the state of her relations to the other powers than her immediate intercourse with the latter. This is most notably true of her exchanges with the German middle states.

Many isolated pieces, in particular those dealing with special or secret agents, have found their way into the Archives Nationales. The materials most interesting to me among the deposits there, however, are those which deal with the project of the descent upon the British coasts between the years 1803 and 1805. In spite of the fact that one can do little more here than to retrace the steps of Édouard Desbrière, the time I devoted to this portion of the work was amply repaid. For it is my opinion that in the plan to conquer England by a direct invasion lies the key to the whole Napoleonic policy from the resumption of the war in 1803 to the eve of Austerlitz in 1805. Neither Desbrière, who concentrated upon the naval aspect of the problem, nor the specialists in diplomatic history have made an adequate attempt to correlate the maritime projects of Napoleon with the foreign policy of the Consulate and early Empire.

Fortunately a considerable proportion of the materials in the archives of other European states which bear upon their foreign relations in the Napoleonic age have been published. The English documents brought out by Oscar Browning and John Holland Rose, the Prussian publications of Paul Bailleu, and the Russian papers in the *Sbornik* and in the massive collection of Tratchevski have made it possible to dispense with much archival labor. For Austria, however, the only available printed sources are the memoirs and correspondence of individuals and the few documents found in the appendices of secondary works. In consequence I found it imperative to investigate the resources of the Viennese archives. There my chief interest lay in the correspondence of the Staatskanzlei with the ambassadors at Paris, Berlin, and London, and in the communications of Chancellor Colloredo with Thugut and Cobenzl.

The memoirs, correspondence, and diaries of the leading figures of the age continue to be important. The multifarious editions of the correspondence of Napoleon I have found particularly rich and complete for this period. The *Recueils de Traités* of De Clercq, the two Martens, de Testa, and Neumann I have referred to for the exact texts of treaties, conventions, armistice agreements, and similar pieces.

The really outstanding secondary works — Sorel, Driault, Fournier — remain indispensable to the student of Napoleonic diplomatic history. Their preëminence is too generally recognized to require comment here.

My more personal obligations being few, I am the more perfectly aware of them. The grant of a Bayard Cutting Fellowship from Harvard University enabled me to pursue my researches in Europe. I owe much to the authorities of the archives in which I was privileged to work. In particular my thanks are due to the late M. Charles Langlois, Director of the Archives Nationales, to M. Georges L'Espinasse of the Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, and to Dr. Lothar Gross of the Haus-, Hof-, und Staats-Archiv of Vienna. To the French Ministry of Marine I am grateful for the permission to use the deposits under its control at the Archives Nationales. Professor Wilbur Cortez Abbott gave me much valuable advice. The late Archibald Cary Coolidge, to whose memory this volume is dedicated, was to me, as to so many others, a source of unflinching encouragement and inspiration. His thoughtfulness made possible the continuation of my studies at a critical time. Through the kindness of Dean Guy Stanton Ford of the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota my work has been greatly facilitated. Above all I am indebted to my wife, Marie Frey Deutsch, for her untiring assistance, under very trying circumstances, in the preparation of my manuscript.

HAROLD C. DEUTSCH

Minneapolis, Minnesota
March, 1937

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THE GENESIS OF NAPOLEONIC IMPERIALISM

INTRODUCTION

Few individuals in the history of mankind have left an imprint upon their own and subsequent generations like that of Napoleon. Yet the vast literature which has grown up about him and his epoch has hardly served to bring agreement on his personal character and qualities, his relation to the forces of his time, and his influence on the evolution of modern institutions.

At the same time it has been one of the strongest impressions of the author that, like many of the giants of history, Napoleon, be it from one viewpoint or another, is judged too much as a fixed and definite personality. It is the frequent fallacy of historians to describe the career of prominent personages as a logical sequence of actions aimed toward a definite goal. Thus, to speak only of Napoleon's contemporaries, Talleyrand and Metternich have often been credited with a kind of omniscience, which often was little more than wisdom after the event, while with the great Corsican himself this course has usually been pursued to his disadvantage. It has been so convenient for detractors to interpret the views and intentions of Bonaparte, First Consul, by the actions and expressions of the Napoleon of the Grand Empire. Yet it is precisely with him that we should be most circumspect and limit our observations in accordance with the element of time. This idea is concisely defined by Henri Houssaye in the preface to a recently published work:

To say "Napoleon thought so and so," one must always consider the period. The young general of the army of Italy, who had taken part in public affairs and knew men otherwise than merely by books, was very different from the idealistic lieutenant of Auxonne, nourished on Rousseau and Raynal. The commander of the army of Egypt had no longer the opinions of the chief of artillery of Toulon. The Emperor of 1810 thought differently from the Emperor of 1814, and the

great vanquished of 1814 and 1815 had abandoned many of the ideas which had fascinated the conqueror of 1809.¹

Of the periods into which one can, more or less arbitrarily, divide the Napoleonic age, the most unified and defined is that of the "great truce" from the Peace of Luneville to the war of the Third Coalition. In these years, during which France rose so magnificently from the chaos into which she had sunk under the Directory, the European state system underwent an evolution at least equal in magnitude to that of the preceding decade of turmoil, a development essentially directed by the genius of a single individual. Of all the problems of Napoleonic history, none has been so much the subject of controversy as the question of the character and motivation of his policy after the achievement of general pacification. And yet, an exhaustive study of this fascinating epoch serves only to confirm the axiom that there is nothing absolute in history, and to condemn the effort to simplify the complexities of Napoleonic policy by labeling it purely personal or, oppositely, a mere continuation of the traditions of the monarchy and the Revolution.

It has always been a subject of considerable debate as to how far Napoleon was influenced by past French policy and the interests of the nation over which he ruled. Certainly he was too dynamic a personality to restrict himself to a mere development of the policy of his predecessors, particularly as such a course implied limitations as definite as its aggressive elements. But in these earlier years of his rule he was inevitably swayed by the traditions of French political thought, as well as obliged to respect them up to a certain point by the insecurity of his position. Thus, although he never identified himself entirely with the French nation, he personified many of the tendencies transmitted from the ancien régime and the Revolution. Sorel went so far as to insist on defining the struggle of Europe with the Revolution and with Napoleon in terms of the historical continuity of the conflict between France and her

¹ G. d'Esparbès and H. Fleischmann, *L'Épopée du Sacre, 1804-1805* (n.d.), pp. 7-8.

great rivals.} In the fifth volume of his masterpiece he maintained:

The Directory, continuing the history of monarchial France under the pretext of propagating the Revolution, in reality turned the forces unchained by the Revolution to the extension of France and French supremacy in Europe. The great European monarchies, also continuing their history, sought, under the pretext of crushing the Revolution, to drive France back, to injure and to subjugate her. France and her rivals thus pursued their frontier disputes, their conflict for the possession of Flanders and the valley of the Rhine, the domination of Germany, of Holland, of Italy, and of the Mediterranean.²

But even if we were unhesitatingly to endorse this lucid expression of a classic concept, it is less easy to agree that Napoleon simply “. . . accommodated himself to the politics of the century as the Conventionnels had done, who spontaneously and without hesitation, as soon as the Revolution had flung them into power, ascribed to the Republic the rights of the former kings.”³ From the first the transition from the Directorial to the Consular government involved new elements of foreign policy. We must, however, be circumspect in ascribing his breach with the past to purely personal motives, for the position of France after the overthrow of the Second Coalition was already such as to have tempted the most moderate of governments to realize upon opportunities hitherto undreamed of. The army had tasted glory and plunder, and the official classes had learned to welcome the opportunities for exploitation afforded by conquered or occupied territories. For years the finances of the Republic had found their only salvation in what could be extracted from neighboring states, so that, to cite but two examples, the young Consulate with the most moderate of intentions would have found it difficult to resign freely its dominion over Holland and northern Italy.

The circumstances which faced Bonaparte in his first years of power were indeed appreciably different from those with

² A. Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution française* (1884), V, 37.

³ *Ibid.*, V, 188.

which the Bourbons had to deal.) During the previous decade Europe had undergone as momentous a territorial and political revolution as the social and economic one in France. The partitions of Poland had unloosed an enormous land hunger among the great powers, so that disproportionate increases in the territories of a state, such as before would have been considered intolerable, were now almost welcomed by its neighbors as pretexts for demanding "compensations." Thus the acquisition of the left bank of the Rhine was widely acknowledged as a reasonable compensation for the gains of the eastern powers in Poland. By many thinking men the age was recognized as one of those in the history of mankind in which the tendency toward massive groupings was an essential element in the evolution of the state system, not only in a European but in a world-wide sense.⁴ }

The advocates of the theory of the natural boundaries of France have always claimed that, once attained, these boundaries would as truly limit French expansion and interference in the affairs of other states as they had previously served to promote such tendencies. Yet we find eminent French historians, Sorel among them, who set forth the view that the necessity of maintaining the Rhine frontier was the chief factor which drove Napoleon to erect barrier after barrier for its protection, until he had reached the very Vistula. In this sense it would of course be easy to show how all Napoleon's wars were primarily defensive, that is, aimed essentially at the achievement of a peace in which the Rhine frontier would receive the final, unqualified recognition of all the states of Europe.⁵

The crux of the matter, however, lies in the fact that the Rhine frontier turned out to be an invitation for further aggression and not a confining barrier. Any strong, unified state estab-

⁴ In such terms the brilliant though unstable Archchancellor Dalberg expressed himself to the French agent Baudus. Baudus to Talleyrand. A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 705, fol. 108-110.

⁵ Cf. the views of R. B. Mowat in the preface of his *The Diplomacy of Napoleon* (1925), vol. V.

lished on one bank must seek henceforth to dominate the other. A proud, ambitious nation like the French, long habituated to the idea that it was destined to be the first in Europe, certainly would not remain without objectives in this direction, and would hardly content itself with the ostensibly defensive ones of the traditional policy. So, while outwardly Napoleon's German system seemed to conform even in details with that of his predecessors, it differed essentially in that, not content with spheres of influence and buffer states, the political covering in which the old monarchy had sought security, he endeavored to erect a French hegemony in South Germany. Thereby he not only neutralized the position of Prussia and Austria in Central Europe, but made a great stride toward the domination of the Continent. Thus the genesis of the Napoleonic Empire in its wider sense can be discerned in the attainment of the Rhine frontier, which, in achieving its principal objective, marks also a definite transition from a purely national policy. Up to the year 1806, at any rate, Napoleon's policy in Germany was largely subject to the dictates of determinism.

✓ Not even in Italy did Napoleon during this period surpass in any essential the objectives formulated by the old monarchy and the Revolution. The former sought the natural boundaries and a protective curtain of allied buffer states; as early as 1792 the aims of the latter were formulated by Brissot as "the extension of France to the limits prescribed by nature, bounded by a circle of federated republics." During the Consulate and the first year of the Empire the Napoleonic policy contented itself with the formation of a clientele of states along the eastern frontier of France, and only after the overwhelming triumph of 1805 did it turn into a system of unlimited aggression. It is also necessary to note that while, on the French side, the renewal of war with England in 1803 and with a continental coalition in 1805 was not merely the result of Napoleon's personal policy, neither did the enemies of France as yet regard the struggle as directed against him individually. During the brief period of general peace the First Consul was usually con-

sidered an influence for moderation and stability in France and even in Europe. Not only was he looked upon as the sole individual strong enough to curb the Revolution, but it was not forgotten that he had used his great personal triumphs (the splendid victories of the years IV and V, the 18th brumaire, and Marengo) to attempt to bring about peace. Even so antagonistic a spirit as Friedrich Gentz was for a time sympathetically inclined toward the young Consulate. Writing a month after the coup d'état, he declared with relative optimism: "For the first time since the Republic came into existence, the desire for peace promises to be more than a trick of war or a cloak for extortion."⁶

The extent to which Napoleon relied upon war to increase his power has indeed been overestimated. Certainly he was never a lover of peace in the sentimental sense; after all, "chacun à son métier!" But during the period of the Consulate he did not deliberately plot a career of strife and conquest. That the enormous increase in the power of France after the Peace of Luneville is to be traced in the main to his achievements in diplomacy has often been overlooked. The renewal of war in 1803 and 1805 was defensive in the sense that he was forced to protect the gains made by diplomacy. Yet one cannot ignore the fact that he always kept war in sight as an ultimate sanction, his diplomacy, in the final analysis, thus being based on confidence in his military might. It is certainly worthy of note that the concept of Clausewitz, that war is "a mere continuation of policy by other means," was drawn from his observations of the Napoleonic era. Even better applicable to the career of Napoleon is perhaps Spengler's reversal of this doctrine, by which peace is simply classified as the milder form of the rivalry of states. What more perfect illustration could one find than the "conquests in peace" that make up so much of the history of the period of the "great truce"?

If there was a Napoleonic system before 1805 it was one of peace and consolidation, a gradual if relentless harvesting of

⁶ *Historisches Journal für 1799*, II, 477.

the fruits of the Revolution both in France and beyond her frontiers. Almost up to the very moment when the war of the Third Coalition began so conveniently, he would have preferred to avoid a renewal of the conflict either with England or on the Continent. Napoleon was certainly an opportunist in the sense that both his diplomacy and his wars conformed essentially to the logic of events: one step led to another; one project realized brought new prospects. For no other period in his career does this hold so completely as for the Consulate, during which he lost the power to resist the temptation of extracting the maximum from his opportunities. In spite of his faith in his star, he could scarcely have envisaged the heights of power which he was eventually, though transitorily, to achieve. It was only Austerlitz, which assured him the domination of Europe as Marengo had confirmed him as ruler of France, that produced a metamorphosis in his character and outlook in conformity with the colossal extension of his prospects.

LIST OF ABBREVIATED REFERENCES

- A.E. Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères
- A.N. Archives Nationales
- S.-A. Haus-, Hof-, and Staats-Archiv (Vienna)
- Corr. Correspondance de Napoléon Ier

PART I
THE PACIFICATION OF EUROPE
(1801-1802)

CHAPTER I

THE ISOLATION OF AUSTRIA

THE year 1801 dawned with every indication of an auspicious future for the young government of France. Its military triumphs and the remarkable reconstruction in domestic affairs had won it the confidence of the nation at large. The Second Coalition, which had raised so high the hopes of its progenitors, was but a memory. One by one its members had fallen by the wayside. Paul I, only yesterday the foremost opponent of the Revolution, was becoming as ardent an admirer of the man who alone had shown the strength to bridle it, and was entering wholeheartedly into his schemes for a common crusade against the mistress of the seas. Prussia, endeavoring feverishly to turn this combination to her own ends, was in reality compelled to submit to the dictates of both. Napoleonic diplomacy had achieved its first great victory — Austria was isolated.

When one reflects upon the critical situation of France at the time of the 18th brumaire, it is difficult to comprehend that so complete a transformation could occur in so brief a period. It is not a sufficient explanation to note that battles had been won and territories occupied, for these successes would have produced but a partial effect if the arts of diplomacy had not proved equal to those of war. Bonaparte had already proved himself as much the master of the one as of the other, justifying the confidence with which the nation had accepted his elevation. "It was not as a general that Bonaparte was called to supreme power," says Roederer, "it was essentially as a statesman. His victories had fixed all eyes upon him, but it was his civil qualities that made him the center of all hopes. His military glory had distinguished him; his moral and political conduct made him esteemed. Yes, others like him had commanded armies, but

only he had shown the spirit of government in his commands; he alone had negotiated while fighting."¹

From the very beginning of the Consulate it had been the manifest intention of Bonaparte to assume the controlling position in the conduct of foreign affairs. In this purpose he was encouraged by Talleyrand, the author of the suggestion that the First Consul exclude his two colleagues from the consultations to which they were entitled under the constitution.² But if the minister of the exterior had ever hoped to guide his chief he was to be sorely disappointed. Talleyrand was indeed indispensable to the First Consul, who not only depended upon his experience, but was impressed with the advantage of having as his foreign minister a born grand seigneur, a natural intermediary with the old courts. His European reputation made him invaluable to a government so parvenu in the rest of its leadership, desirous as it was to depart from the path of contrariety trod by its predecessors and to secure acceptance in the better circles of the society of nations. What was more, the demonic Corsican never could dispense, either in his military or civil capacities, with the coöperation of individuals who had the peculiar and precious gift of putting order and continuity into his grand conceptions and giving body and form to the ideas which were flung in an endless torrent from his seething brain. Yet, while Talleyrand suggested expedients, warned of pitfalls, and usually, though by no means always, directed the detail of negotiation, it was Bonaparte who freely accepted or rejected what he proposed, and laid down at critical moments, not only the broad lines of policy, but even the letter of procedure. Anyone who has studied Talleyrand's diplomatic correspondence during *any* period of his incumbency of the ministry of exterior relations can scarcely avoid the conclusion that the decisive impetus in almost every instance came from the First Consul and Emperor.³

¹ P. L. Roederer, *Autour de Bonaparte* (1909), p. 38.

² Talleyrand, *Mémoires* (1891), I, 276; L. A. Bourrienne, *Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte* (1832), III, 324.

³ Crane Brinton in his recent *The Lives of Talleyrand* (1936) agrees

Yet while throughout the career of Napoleon he so outshone his co-workers that even the most brilliant were thrown into the shade, Talleyrand did, to a certain extent, escape the general effacement, preserving both his independence of mind and a certain degree of freedom of expression. An aristocrat at heart and the victim of an insatiable desire to play a rôle, he could never become a mute, unreasoning tool. In consequence, his relationship with his master was eventually to degenerate into a mere marriage of convenience and then to suffer a complete rupture, for Napoleon came in time to realize that, while his minister might be bought or intimidated, he could not sink his individuality in the service of another. It should therefore cause no surprise that as Talleyrand came to appear less necessary (and especially as the popular notion regarding his indispensability began to irritate the dictator of the continent), Napoleon reconciled himself to a separation from his great lieutenant.

These remarks should not convey the impression that the relations of the First Consul with his celebrated minister were those of an association based solely upon a consciousness of mutual advantage. On the part of Talleyrand in particular, esteem and admiration frequently ceded to enthusiastic affection. It would be difficult to discover another example of a minister who addressed to his master letters so replete with passionate sentiment. Though the man who exercised upon him this "irresistible attraction" betrayed no equal reciprocal affection, he gave during these years every evidence of an intimate personal regard.⁴

On the morrow of the 18th brumaire Bonaparte and Talleyrand were in agreement on the essential mission of the new government: order and restoration at home, peace and recogni-

(pp. 127 f.) that he never initiated any great measure of foreign policy, though maintaining at the same time that for some years Napoleon's policies "broadly coincided" with his, "and may indeed have been not uninfluenced by Talleyrand himself." When the divergencies between their views ceased to be reconcilable, Talleyrand left the ministry.

⁴ For the sentiments of Talleyrand and Bonaparte toward one another, see G. Lacour-Gayet, *Talleyrand* (1930), II, 9-16, and Émile Dard, *Napoléon et Talleyrand* (1935), pp. 45-49.

tion of the gains of the Revolution abroad. That the latter two were for the moment incompatible was evident to both, so that the famous New Year appeals to George III and Emperor Francis can hardly be credited with complete sincerity. One motive for them is stated with frank cynicism by Talleyrand in a letter to the First Consul shortly after:

It is always assuring a good position at the beginning of a campaign to manifest a warm desire for peace and to make every attempt toward its re-establishment. If the result of the campaign is favorable, one has acquired the right to show severity; if disastrous, one need not bear the reproach of having brought it on.⁵

An even greater consideration was the anticipated reaction of public opinion to this show of pacific sentiments. The result must indeed have exceeded the most sanguine expectations. The injudicious British reply, in which the restoration of the Bourbons was made practically a *sine qua non* for the opening of negotiations, not only arrayed France solidly behind her new government, but aroused much protest and strengthened the opposition in England.⁶ In Germany the turn of opinion was immediately reflected in the leading periodicals, the future anti-British bias of which in most cases found its origin in this period.

The deference to public opinion was indeed to remain one of the most significant features of the diplomatic and domestic political tactics of Napoleon, though his appreciation of its import is demonstrated rather by his care in giving the proper color to his acts than in conforming them to what the popular will seemed to demand. "The first duty of the prince," he said at St. Helena, "is, without a doubt, to do what the nation wishes; what

⁵ Undated, probably January, 1800. P. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich von 1795 bis 1807* (1887), I, 522. How well Napoleon learned this lesson can be inferred from his habitual employment of such tactics before the commencement of later wars. Compare his letter to the King of Prussia on the eve of Jena, October 12, 1806. *Corr.*, XIII, No. 10990.

⁶ On January 22 Grenville reported in a note to Buckingham: "I am told that this French dose of negotiations is beginning to work on the public mind here, and the strongest proof that it does so is that Fox decidedly comes down on Monday to assist and promote the active operations." Buckingham, *Memoirs of the Court and Cabinets of George III*, II, 11-12.

the nation desires is of course hardly ever what it says; its will and needs are to be found less in its words than in the heart of the prince." ⁷ This portrait of the prince might well be called a Napoleonic version of the "l'état c'est moi" dictum ascribed to Louis XIV, but in actual practice he deferred much more to public sentiment than he was prepared to admit. His police reported daily upon the drift of popular opinion in France, while his ambassadors were constantly reminded to take note of it in the countries to which they were accredited. So anxious was the First Consul to direct the thought of the nation, that he was only with the greatest difficulty dissuaded from changing the Ministry of Public Instruction into a "Direction de l'esprit public." Throughout 1800 and 1801 the press was most skillfully used to impress upon the public that the war was now exclusively aimed at the achievement of such a peace of understanding as would recognize the gains of the Revolution at home and abroad. As the French were still by no means prepared to demand peace at any price, the success of these tactics was all that could be wished for.

Europe in 1800 had in reality been more divided against itself than it was united against France. As a heritage of the eighteenth century there remained more or less sharp conflicts of interest between Prussia and Russia in Poland, Russia and Austria in the Near East, and Austria and Prussia in Germany. Russia was just withdrawing from active coöperation with the coalition, while Prussia had long before ceased to participate in the combinations against revolutionary France, preferring to erect a sort of Chinese wall between herself and the region of conflict by her line of demarcation. While Austria had thus been isolated in a military sense, she did not, considering her favorable position before Marengo, particularly regret being rid of a rather inconvenient ally. Thugut, despite the changes of the past decade, still hoped to continue the policy of Joseph II: regain Lombardy and despoil Bavaria. Even in the face of the

⁷ T. Bitterauf, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Bonapartismus* (1915), p. 23.

catastrophic defeats which Austria then suffered in Italy and Germany he was determined to continue the struggle, but the Emperor Francis weakened before the storm. On September 20, at the advice of Lehrbach and without Thugut's knowledge, he agreed to an armistice. Five days later, at a lively session of the ministerial conference in which his pleas in behalf of Austria's obligations to England were rejected, Thugut demanded and received his dismissal, Lehrbach being appointed his successor. This wretched figure, who even then was generally suspected of responsibility for the Rastadt outrage,⁸ could hardly expect to hold himself against the onslaught of his personal and political opponents. Lord Minto, then on a special mission to Vienna with the particular purpose of holding Austria in line, even went so far as to demand Lehrbach's departure directly from the Emperor. Though Francis deeply resented this high-handed procedure,⁹ he himself had too little confidence in his new minister to care to maintain him. So Lehrbach, who in the delight of his elevation had hastened to inform Talleyrand of his appointment, found himself repudiated the day after. He was replaced by Count Louis Cobenzl, who became Vice-Chancellor and was given charge of the conduct of foreign affairs together with the Chancellor, Prince Colloredo. But a few days later Cobenzl hurried off to conduct the negotiations at Lune-

⁸ An interesting item in connection with the Rastadt murders is contained in a report of a much later date of the French minister at Munich, Otto. "Un ministre autrichien," he writes, "employé pendant la dernière guerre dans le cercle de Souabe, et très mécontent de son Gouvernement, vient de me dire que le massacre de nos ministres à Rastadt a été concerté entre la Reine de Naples et M. de Lehrbach; que ce dernier a trouvé moyen de surprendre la signature de l'Empereur pour autoriser ce grand forfait; que l'Archiduc Charles avoit à la vérité sévi dans le commencement contre les meurtriers, mais, que sur la présentation de l'ordre signé de l'Empereur, il s'est vu dans la triste nécessité de mettre fin à ses poursuites. Ce ministre étoit alors près de l'Archiduc Charles, et il jure ce récit est de la plus exacte vérité." Report of the 6 nivôse an XIII (Dec. 26, 1804). A E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 3.

⁹ "He [the Emperor] insisted on his right to choose his own ministers, and the impropriety of another prince interfering in that matter. He rejected the English principle of the responsibility of ministers for acts sanctioned by the Sovereign." Minto to Wickham, Sept. 29, 1800, in E. E. Minto, *Life and Letters of the Earl of Minto* (1874), III, 160.

ville, leaving the field clear for the restoration of the influence of Thugut, who in fact continued to guide everything from behind the scenes.

The first negotiations at Luneville were thus doomed to failure, for while Bonaparte's aim was to drive Austria to a separate peace,¹⁰ the government at Vienna, again dominated by Thugut, now looked upon the armistice merely as an opportunity for recuperating from its late defeats. The English cabinet had been justly alarmed at the apparent willingness of its ally to treat alone, but the assurances given Minto quieted Pitt's fears, and on December 3, the very day of the disaster of Hohenlinden, he announced to Parliament that Austria held to her obligations. That final setback to Austrian arms, however, was the deathblow to the system of Thugut, whose complete retirement was now conceded by the Emperor.¹¹ Colloredo with characteristic lack of self-confidence had to look about for an assistant and found him in Count Trautmannsdorff, who was placed in charge of foreign affairs without official title until the return of Cobenzl.

The Treaty of Luneville of February 9, 1801, has frequently been characterized as disastrous for Austria. It did have the air of being the dictation of a conqueror, and the prestige of the Hapsburgs seemed hopelessly compromised, but that was already entailed in their military reverses. The only vital differ-

¹⁰ Bonaparte did in fact make an appearance of proffered negotiations to England at this time, but he was careful to avoid any direct summons to Luneville or Paris. How well the British understood this is shown by a letter of Thomas Grenville's to Buckingham: "I feel quite persuaded . . . that his (Bonaparte's) real intention is to drive Austria to a separate peace first, and then trust to our solitary station which we shall occupy in the war, together with the domestic pressure of famine and distress, for imposing upon us likewise conditions of peace." Buckingham, *Memoirs of the Court and Cabinets of George III*, III, 95. The effort to separate Austria and England is also strikingly demonstrated by the French newspaper policy, according to which the Powers were represented as the victims of English deception, the Emperor praised as a lover of peace, and all the blame thrust upon Thugut and his partisans. The Consular proclamation of March 8, 1800, which called the French nation to arms, did not even mention Austria, but proclaimed England as the great national enemy. *Corr.*, VI, no. 4649.

¹¹ That Thugut continued to exercise much influence is shown by his voluminous correspondence with Colloredo, particularly during the next year.

ence from the Peace of Campo Formio was the expulsion of the Grand Duke of Tuscany; but it is possible that even Bonaparte had as yet no conception of the great advantages he was to derive therefrom. He had certainly played his cards with supreme mastery. By granting Austria's demand for a compensation for the Grand Duke in Germany, he had committed her to the principle of secularization, which she could not possibly reconcile with her primary interests. She was still further pledged to this obnoxious policy by the seventh article of the Treaty,¹² which provided for the indemnification of those hereditary princes who had lost territory on the left bank of the Rhine by assignments of lands situated on the other side. That the ecclesiastical lords were the sheep destined for the shearing was from the first self-evident. An even greater weakness in this article from the Austrian point of view was the vague, if not meaningless, description of the manner in which the compensations were to be doled out. It was to proceed according to arrangements "ultimately to be determined." The statesmen of Vienna appear to have been under the illusion that the Emperor would in one fashion or another exercise the decisive influence in the whole procedure. Their awakening was therefore to be so much the more rude and disconcerting.

The dual system of authority under the joint cabinet of Colloredo and Trautmannsdorff had enhanced the indescribable confusion of Austrian affairs. The former at least partially recognized his own incapacity, but neither he nor the Emperor trusted the equally mediocre Trautmannsdorff, from whom many of the most confidential documents were withheld. Francis, accustomed to rely entirely on Thugut, now applied to everyone for advice without giving his confidence to anybody. "I have so exhausted my monarchy in men and in money," he wrote despairingly to Cobenzl, "that she is unable to take her

¹² This article reads: "L'Empire sera tenu de donner aux princes héréditaires qui se trouvent dépossédés à la rive gauche du Rhin, un dédommagement qui sera pris dans le sein du dit empire, suivant les arrangements qui, après ces bases, seront ultérieurement déterminés." G. de Martens, *Recueil des principaux traités conclus par les Puissances de l'Europe depuis 1761* (1831), VII, 292.

proper place in the European equilibrium; at the same time I have lost all my political connections, and in this condition cannot count on a single real ally.”¹³ The Emperor and his advisers were thus sane enough to realize that Austria’s greatest danger lay in her isolation. As the old hostility towards Prussia was as strong as ever and the Tsar too irritated even to listen to any proposal, France remained the only possibility, and for a time the rejuvenation of the system of 1756 became a cardinal point in Austrian policy.

Even at Luneville Cobenzl had been instructed to “grasp a favorable opportunity to recall to the French the idea of a return to the system of 1756.”¹⁴ The reaction of Joseph Bonaparte to these overtures was rather noncommittal, but he advised Cobenzl to bring his proposals to Paris. This the Austrian plenipotentiary was so much the more willing to do as he hoped thereby to ensure a more favorable execution of those articles in the treaty in which Austria was the most interested. During the six months now to be passed by him at Paris it was a natural consequence of the disorganization of the administration at Vienna that the conduct of affairs should be directed by him from the French capital. Nor was this amazing situation the result of a series of circumstances that could not have been foreseen. For his original instructions were to communicate with the ambassadors of Russia and Prussia, to carry on a regular correspondence with Starhemberg in London, and to give the home government the continual benefit of his advice.¹⁵ Yet Cobenzl, though a finished diplomat of the old school in matters of detailed negotiation, lacked the statesmanlike qualities necessary to hold his own in the contest with his Corsican opponent, a fact already clear during the negotiations at Campo Formio. His visit to Paris played directly into the hands of the First Consul, who, while he had at that time no thought of an

¹³ A. von Vivenot, “Thugut und sein politisches System,” *Archiv für österreichische Geschichte*, XLIII (1870), 182.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, XLIII, 176.

¹⁵ Francis to Cobenzl, Feb. 21, 1801. *Ibid.*, XLIII, 182.

Austrian alliance, still found it to his advantage to play off the Austrian proposals against those of Russia and Prussia.

Of the impression gained by the Austrian emissary from his first official audience with the First Consul his report to the Emperor Francis bears eloquent testimony. The apparently unexpected pomp and ceremony, the respectful, almost submissive demeanor of Talleyrand, the self-effacement of the Second and Third Consuls, "*toujours dans leur rôle et contenance subalterne*" — all combined to signify the presence of but a single master. "In this manner," he concludes his reflections, "a little Corsican gentleman, become in fact King of France, maintains a court perhaps more brilliant than that of the unhappy Louis XVI, who at any rate never exercised an equal authority."¹⁶

In the interview of three hours which succeeded the formal audience Cobenzl could discover little cause for satisfaction. His first vague suggestions of a more intimate union between the two countries were met by the brutally frank query: "What would France have to gain by such an alliance?" Yet the First Consul had no intention of discouraging Austria's hopes entirely, for it was in every way to his advantage to keep Cobenzl at Paris in the role of suppliant. Austria would be less likely to make similar advances in other quarters, while the governments of Berlin and St. Petersburg would be stimulated to greater pliability by the spectacle offered by their competitor. It was of course necessary to convince Cobenzl of the complete harmony arrived at between France and Russia. To the Austrian envoy the First Consul was effusive in his expressions of admiration for Paul I, whom he represented as in accord with himself even to the extent of a projected division of Turkey. Here alone, he indicated, was the point where Austria might hope to tie up with the French system. By extending her frontiers to the Black Sea she could assure herself of an excellent indemnification for her losses in the recent war.

It cannot be said that Cobenzl evinced any particular en-

¹⁶ March 12, 1801. S.-A., FRANKREICH, 262, fol. 25-34.

thusiasm about these proposals. To his master he freely expressed his doubts regarding the supposed reversal of Russia's Turkish policy. Should Bonaparte's version be confirmed, however, it would be difficult if not impossible for Austria to avoid acquiescence. In the meantime Cobenzl had enough to concern him in puzzling over the dilemma of how to secure a satisfactory indemnity for the Grand Duke of Tuscany without having to resort to secularization in Germany. The sole possible solution was to find it in Italy, but when Cobenzl approached Bonaparte with this suggestion, he angrily exclaimed that nothing less than a successful war would enable Austria to cross the Adige. Resigning himself to this categorical rejection, the Austrian then sought to gain French agreement to the broadest possible interpretation of the Grand Duke's losses in fixing his indemnity. Bonaparte held him off for a time, but finally, irritated by the continued haggling for a full and complete (*plein et entière*) indemnity as guaranteed by the Treaty of Luneville, cried out: "Ah, 'full and complete,' that is part of every treaty: but without convulsing Germany and making new enemies you will not receive more than Salzburg."¹⁷ It ought thus to have been quite plain to the cabinet at Vienna that the First Consul had no intention of joining Austria in an alliance, and the more able and well-informed of her representatives gave every possible warning of the true state of affairs,¹⁸ yet he managed to give Cobenzl just enough encouragement to make him feel doubtful about breaking off the negotiations. So the affair dragged on inconclusively, when the news of the death of Paul I changed the entire aspect of the diplomatic panorama of Europe.

¹⁷ Cobenzl to Francis, April 19, 1801. S.-A., *FRANKREICH*, 262, IV, fol. 65-70. The same violent statement was repeated in a conversation of a month later. Cobenzl to Francis, May 19, 1801. *Ibid.*, 262, V, fol. 48-63.

¹⁸ An example is Starhemberg's report of March 24, 1801, in which he says that every day he has more reason to believe ". . . qu'il se trame un nouveau plan de perfidie à nos dépens entre la Prusse, la République, et la Russie. Bonaparte veut à tout prix conserver l'amitié de Paul I tant qu'il la juge nécessaire à ses intérêts, et il est disposé à y tout sacrifier. Je sais qu'il veut nous leurrer de vaines espérances et se faire ensuite un mérite à Petersbourg de les avoir déjoués." S.-A., *ENGLAND*, 187, fol. 340-341.

CHAPTER II

AN INTERLUDE—BONAPARTE AND PAUL I

PAUL I had become Tsar of all the Russias in 1796. In the few brief years of his reign this new "madman of the north" had then elbowed his way into the forefront of a generation of European sovereigns whose mediocrity was scarcely less marked than his own eccentricity. Embittered and warped by the régime imposed upon him by his mother, he was suspicious and capricious in his personal relations, quixotic in his notions of loyalty and honor, narrow and obstinate in his opinions. Endowed with such a character and unable to boast of any particular talents, it was hardly a compensatory feature that he was vulnerable to grand gestures and fascinated by grandiose conceptions. Violently hostile to the Revolution, he had been one of the prime movers of the Second Coalition; under Suvorov his troops had astonished Europe by inflicting a series of painful defeats upon the French in Italy. But the lack of coöperation and the petty jealousy of the Austrian commanders had resulted in the withdrawal of his armies. His next plan had been to unite England, Denmark, Prussia, and Sweden into a union aiming to resist the pretensions of both France and Austria, but the growing breach between himself and the British put an end to this project also. The cause of the rupture can be traced in the main to the fiasco of the Anglo-Russian expedition to Holland, the failure of which was crowned by British neglect of the Russian troops wintering in the Channel Islands.

It was a challenging task for French diplomacy to transform this negative state of affairs into a positive connection. Bonaparte himself had from the first recognized the significance of a Russian alliance. It is of course doubtful to what point his imperialist ambitions may have developed by this time. But if he had already toyed with the notion of "dividing the world,"

he must have appreciated that this could solely be arrived at in accord with Russia, the only other continental power whose interests then were not strictly European. Such an arrangement with the English oligarchy was quite out of the question, even if France had been willing to make the necessary sacrifices. Of course Russia also would have her price for giving France a free hand in the West, but in 1800-1801 the situation was so favorable that France could hope for an arrangement permitting her to retain some of her pretensions in the Orient as well. Much was then to be gained by concessions that were more flattering than real.

Quite aside from any imperialist dreams which Bonaparte may already have nurtured at this early date, the position of the French Republic was such as to make a connection with Russia eminently desirable. At bottom the peace of Luneville represented only an "arrangement" between France and Austria. Its true validity in reorganizing the affairs of Western and Central Europe depended in the final analysis upon the accession of England, whose consent would never be given as long as there remained any hope of ultimate victory over her great opponent. Any such expectance a solid Franco-Russian alliance would render illusory; she would in fact then be put to it to defend herself. She could of course count upon the fragile and deceptive character of Russia's alliances, concerning which she had had repeated experiences — for Bonaparte the lesson still remained to be learned.

Paul in his customary despotic fashion had instructed his representatives abroad to ignore every attempt at communication made by the French government. But the latter held a trump card in the shape of about 7,000 Russian prisoners, taken in Masséna's recent Swiss campaign. As Austria and England had categorically refused to accept these in exchange for French captives, some kind of early communication between France and Russia became inevitable. Bonaparte, with characteristic breadth of view, instead of haggling for petty advantages, seized upon the opportunity for a magnificent gesture. Talleyrand was

instructed to draw up a letter to the Russian Vice-Chancellor, Count Nikita Panin, in which, after scoring the ungenerous refusal of the English and Austrians to give up any of their own prisoners to secure the liberation of the Russians, in spite of the English holding captive over 20,000 Frenchmen, the offer was made to return the Tsar's troops with new arms, uniforms, and their own flags without any condition whatsoever. It would only be necessary to let the French government know what route the Emperor wished his troops to take.¹ The matter was still being considered in St. Petersburg, when Bonaparte wrote his famous personal letter to Paul, in which he offered to give up Malta to him as the rightful Grand Master of the Order, and suggested that it be garrisoned by the released prisoners. This was a very master stroke, for, as the island was on the point of falling into the hands of the British, it would only further embroil them with Paul.

The news of the First Consul's proposals created an immense sensation in St. Petersburg. Paul was touched by what he regarded as an act of true chivalry. General Sprengporten, a Swedish adventurer in the Russian service, was delegated to conduct the prisoners to Russia. In the instructions signed by Paul himself the community of interest of France and Russia in contrast to the rest of Europe was stressed. Sprengporten was authorized to express these sentiments as those of the Tsar everywhere.² The general, a man with a lively taste for mixing in political affairs, had his head quite turned by the consideration shown him as "Russian ambassador" in Paris. The First Consul and Talleyrand apparently hoped to inveigle him into commitments which he had not been authorized to make, much in the same fashion as they had done with the Austrian envoy, Count Saint-Julien, the previous summer.³

At St. Petersburg the new turn of affairs had in the meantime

¹ F. Martens, *Recueil des traités et conventions conclus par la Russie*, XIII, 250 ff.

² Instructions of Sept. 28 [Russian style]. Copy A.E., RUSSIE, 140, no. 2.

³ For a study of this episode see A. Fournier, "Die Mission des Grafen von Saint-Julien in Jahre 1800," in *Historische Studien und Skizzen* (1885).

resulted in a considerable increase in Russian ambitions. The principal representative of this tendency was the Chancellor, Count Feodor Vassilievitch Rostopchine, a rather miserable figure,⁴ from whom one would hardly expect such grand pretensions as those expressed in a memorandum which he presented to the Tsar on October 1, 1800. After sketching the European situation and the role which Russia could and ought to play, he summed up his viewpoint with: "Russia, as much by her position as by her inexhaustible resources, is and must be the first power in the world." He maintained, one must admit with much justice, that all of the continental powers were in a position in which the good will of Russia was essential to them: Bonaparte was soliciting the Tsar's support in order to facilitate the conclusion of peace with England,⁵ Prussia depended on Russia for the assurance of a favorable indemnity for her losses beyond the Rhine, and Austria required Russian support against France. Yet, in spite of this preponderant position, Russia would, with the exception of Austria, be the only power without appreciable territorial gains (he apparently counted the larger part of Poland for nothing) and was justified in demanding compensation. For its achievement an active policy would be necessary — Frederick the Great had shown the way by demonstrating the importance and possibility of partitions.

The most likely field of partition that could occur to Rostopchine was of course the Ottoman Empire. For Russia he had naturally selected the lion's share with Moldavia, Roumania,⁶ and Bulgaria; that Roumelia with Constantinople would also be part of her gains is at least indicated in the context. Austria was to receive Bosnia, Serbia, and Walachia, and France Egypt,

⁴ Schiemann speaks of him as "ein kriechender Höfling und Intrigant, ein erbärmlicher Wicht." *Die Ermordung Pauls und die Thronbesteigung Nikolaus I* (1902), p. 2.

⁵ Paul's comment in the margin here is, "Il peut réussir."

⁶ As "Roumania" then consisted of Moldavia and Walachia, Rostopchine probably had become confused in his geography. Driault (*Napoléon et l'Europe: la politique extérieure*, p. 41), apparently for this reason, has him include Walachia in Russia's share, but as the Chancellor expressly assigns it to Austria, this cannot have been his intention.

while Prussia would be compensated in Germany by Hanover, Münster, and Paderborn. The Chancellor was sure that England would be the only power opposed to the partition, and to prevent her from hindering it he suggested the revival of the old Armed Neutrality of the North, to which France and Spain would this time be asked to adhere.⁷ He then proposed himself for a secret mission to Paris and Vienna. It was to be given out that he had fallen into disgrace, thus making his disappearance from St. Petersburg comprehensible. That Bonaparte would welcome his advances he was certain, for he would "see in the partition a sure means of reducing the power of Great Britain and assuring all the conquests of France at the general peace." From Paris he would pass to Vienna, where he intended to work through Cobenzl, with whom he was well acquainted. "I am persuaded," declared Rostopchine, "that the Emperor and his ministers will be as satisfied with the partition of Turkey as would be a ruined man who has just gained the grand prize at the lottery." From Vienna he would return to St. Petersburg after the rumor of his "recall" had been duly disseminated. It was probably understood that he would stop at Berlin on the way to Paris, but the agreement of Prussia was so taken for granted that he did not even mention the manner in which it was to be obtained. The entire scheme had the enthusiastic endorsement of Paul, who wrote in the margin: "I approve your plan in every point and desire that you put it into execution."⁸

Rostopchine's project has often been described as a sort of silly fancy on the part of the Tsar and his mediocre minister, but in spite of the small opinion we may entertain of its author, it contained many elements of soundness and feasibility. Prussia, little interested as she was in the Near East, would have found in the lot assigned to her the realization of her chief

⁷ Rostopchine makes the paradoxical remark that all this is to be done, "sans porter atteinte à notre alliance avec l'Angleterre."

⁸ The complete document is given by the Duc de Broglie under the title of "La politique de la Russie en 1800 d'après un document inédit," *Revue d'histoire diplomatique*, III (1889), 1-12.

ambition, and was, in any case, bound to follow the united dictates of France and Russia. We have seen that Cobenzl, opposed as he conceived his master's interest to be to the partition of the Ottoman Empire, had specifically recognized Austria's inability to refuse participation in such an enterprise if launched by France in full agreement with Russia. As for Bonaparte, he had from the first seen therein a basis for common action with the Tsar. He, whom the Russian Chancellor regarded as "the very center of the plan," had written to Talleyrand shortly before Marengo: "If the news from Egypt is confirmed [concerning a victory of Kleber at Heliopolis], it would be of importance to us to have someone in Russia. The Ottoman Empire cannot exist much longer, and if Paul I turns his views in this direction, our interests are united."⁹ The days of Tilsit were still in the distant future, and the price he then refused to pay may have appeared less exorbitant in 1800-1801. There was still too much to do in Europe for Constantinople to have become the pivotal point of his political system as he later described it.¹⁰ As far as these years are concerned, the words of Albert Vandal hold very well when he maintains that above all else Bonaparte saw in the Orient "a means of diversion and transaction; it was on this terrain that he hoped to divide our enemies, dissolve the coalition by ravishing it of one of its members, attach one of the principal courts to himself, whichever it might be, conquer in fine the grand alliance of which he had need in order to master the continent and vanquish England."¹¹ Paul's new pretensions thus made possible a closer rapprochement with France. The pension of 200,000 rubles previously granted to Louis XVIII was cut off, and the unhappy prince obliged to leave Mittau in mid-

⁹ June 1, 1800. *Corr.*, VI, p. 4860.

¹⁰ When after Tilsit one of his ministers congratulated him on being the master of Europe, Napoleon objected: "Je ne serai maître que lorsque j'en aurai signé le traité à Constantinople, et le traité que je viens de signer me retarde d'un an." J. A. Chaptal, *Mes souvenirs sur Napoléon* (1893), p. 350.

¹¹ A. Vandal, *Napoléon et Alexandre Ier, l'alliance russe sous le premier Empire* (1896), I, 3.

winter. By a ukase of November 15 the Anglophile Vice-Chancellor Panin was banished to his estate. Extraordinary pressure was put upon Prussia and the Scandinavian states to enter into the projected union for the defense of neutral rights. On December 16 treaties to that effect were concluded at St. Petersburg with Sweden and Denmark; two days later followed a similar one with Prussia.¹² No possible means of embarrassing the British was neglected. As early as August 29 Paul had pronounced the sequestration of the property of British subjects within his dominions. When his demand for the surrender of Malta was refused, a general embargo on English vessels was declared. Prussia was obliged to occupy Hanover and close the mouths of the Elbe and the Weser to British shipping. From the Baltic to the Adriatic only the coast of Portugal continued to offer a friendly welcome to the merchant navies of Albion.

The necessity of replacing Sprengporten by a better qualified ambassador could not be ignored at St. Petersburg. But Kalytcheff, who arrived at Paris in the first week of March, 1801, was a narrow, stiff-necked aristocrat of pronounced Francophobe tendency. His reports to the Tsar were far from complimentary to the Consular regime, and in the conferences between him and Talleyrand it soon became very evident that there was a wide difference of opinion on the details of the projected pacification. Even before the preparation of his memorandum of October 1, Rostopchine had formulated five basic conditions of any peace with France: the restoration of Malta to the Knights of St. John, the re-establishment of the King of Sardinia in his possessions on the Italian mainland, and the territorial integrity of Sicily, Bavaria, and Württemberg.¹³ But Kalytcheff went beyond this and demanded the evacuation of Egypt. To this the First Consul was far from ready to agree, though he was

¹² F. Martens, *Recueil des traités et conventions conclus par la Russie*, VI, 286 ff.

¹³ A statement of these conditions, dated September 26, 1800, and signed by Rostopchine, is found in A.E., RUSSIE, 140, no. 1. It was apparently delivered by Sprengporten.

willing to meet the Russians halfway on their other propositions. But Kalytcheff haggled over every point, until Bonaparte lost patience and was about to send Duroc to St. Petersburg to appeal directly to the Tsar when the news of Paul's death reached Paris.

"The news of the death of Paul has been a veritable thunderbolt for Bonaparte," wrote the Prussian envoy, Lucchesini. "On receiving it from Talleyrand, he uttered a cry of despair, and he has given himself up to the idea that the death has not been a natural one, the blow originating in England. He believes he has lost his strongest support against her, for he had hoped to find in Paul what Frederick II found in Peter III."¹⁴ It is not difficult to comprehend the First Consul's emotion, when one considers the change which this event brought about in his position. He was thereby deprived of all means to strike England except by those of direct invasion. The situation of Britain before the death of Paul was indeed a very precarious one: France, Spain, and Holland were arrayed against her in open war; Sweden, Denmark, Russia, and Prussia faced her in the League of Armed Neutrality; Austria and Naples had abandoned her even diplomatically; Portugal was soon to be compelled to follow suit. She was as completely isolated as France had been in 1793, though her insular position still made her invulnerable against direct attack. She was being assailed in her commerce and in her chief continental connection (Hanover), while the most valuable portion of her colonial empire, India, was being threatened with invasion.

The death of Paul I, together with the attack upon Copenhagen, put an end to the Armed Neutrality. Sweden and Denmark came to terms with England in May, and on June 17 a treaty was signed by the latter with Russia, in which, although agreeing to the principle that a blockade had to be effective in order to be valid, Britain secured the recognition of the right of search. Paul's projected expedition against India, which had

¹⁴ Report of April 17, 1801. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, 38.

already begun its march, was of course recalled.¹⁵ France was thus at every point thrown back upon her own resources — peace without victory had become inevitable.

¹⁵ At St. Helena Napoleon said to O'Meara: "If Paul had lived you would have lost India; we had formed a joint plan for its invasion." Waliszewski, *Paul I of Russia*, p. 371. There is much doubt of the First Consul's connection with Paul's project, for no contemporary documents exist to show any such. For a fuller examination of the question see Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution française*, VI, 113-114.

CHAPTER III

THE TRUCE OF AMIENS

WITH the death of Paul I whatever plans Bonaparte may have entertained for the partition of the Ottoman Empire were relegated to the distant future.¹ The sharp contrast which even before then had developed between French and Russian views concerning the Mediterranean had already made any real co-operation in this quarter problematical. Kalytcheff had acted as if he knew nothing of his master's plans for a Turkish partition, demanding the evacuation of Egypt in a hectoring fashion which clearly showed how little he cared for the success of his mission. The First Consul, on his part, had begun to hedge on the subject of Malta, even going so far as to encourage the British in refusing to relinquish the island to Paul.² Thus the conflict in Franco-Russian interests tended very much towards a neutralization of the activities of both powers in this quarter, a typical aspect of Near East politics ever since.

Much that is now to happen becomes clearer if one recalls that while French ambitions in the East were suffering these setbacks, Bonaparte's visions of colonial empire began to take more definite form in the West. By the treaty of St. Ildefonso of October 1, 1800, Spain had retroceded Louisiana to France. An excellent bargain this for the First Consul, who had long appreciated the convenience of paying for what he wanted out of other people's pockets. In this case Spain was conceded the dubious advantage of having the husband of one of the Infantas, Louis of Parma, made ruler of Tuscany, soon to become the

¹ For an immediate effort to sound the new Tsar on this subject see below, pp. 41-42.

² On Dec. 9, 1800, Grenville had written to Carysfort, the British envoy in Berlin: "At the same time that Bonaparte offered Malta to Paul, he sent us a proposal through Spain that he would evacuate it provided we would join in a guarantee that Paul should never have it." *Manuscripts of J. B. Fortescue, preserved at Drogheda*, VI, 405.

kingdom of Etruria. Even so the execution of this portion of the treaty depended upon the ability of the French to dispose of the objections of Austria. As long as the war with England lasted, the value of Louisiana to the First Consul was of course equally negligible. For the development of this colony, the recovery of Haiti from the revolted blacks, and the revival of French overseas trade, peace with the leading maritime power was an absolute essential. For France the war was thus rapidly losing its *raison d'être*: it no longer offered opportunities for aggrandizement, blocked the re-establishment of national prosperity, and above all else, no longer offered any reasonable prospect for decisive victory.

There can be little question but that the First Consul perceived all this immediately on the receipt of the news of Paul's assassination. His first act was the decision of the fate of Piedmont, which had been left undetermined at Luneville. It appears that for a time, anxious to placate the Tsar, who betrayed a very lively interest in the House of Savoy, he actually had considered the restoration of the larger part of Piedmont. As much at least was indicated by the annexation, in September of 1800, of all territory east of the Sesia to the Cisalpine Republic. This act was apparently motivated by the consideration that if Piedmont should be returned to the Sardinian monarchy, the section which controlled the approach to the Simplon pass would remain under French domination. Shortly after, the Piedmontese diplomat Saint-Marsan was invited to Paris. But Charles Emmanuel of Sardinia spoiled his chances by dilatory tactics, his minister not arriving in the French capital until February 16, 1801. The negotiations soon came to a deadlock, for each side put forward screens of demands which the other found it inconvenient even to treat upon. Saint-Marsan wanted the restoration of Piedmont to be made the preliminary basis of any discussion, while the First Consul replied that nothing could be done until Sardinia had closed her harbors to British shipping.⁸ Matters stood at this point, when the information

⁸ Correspondence with Saint-Marsan. A.E., SARDAIGNE, 281.

regarding Paul's demise reached Paris. The certainty of Russia's now being a neutral instead of an ally made it less imperative to show her such consideration, while it was also deemed desirable to place England before a *fait accompli*. The preliminary step to the annexation of Piedmont, its organization into a French military division, was therefore immediately taken.⁴ To give this procedure the air of being independent of the event with which it was so vitally connected, the decree was antedated to April 2.⁵ A few days later Saint-Marsan was requested to quit France; he changed his tone considerably and even seemed inclined to negotiate on the French basis, but Bonaparte was no longer willing to compromise. When the first week of July found the Sardinian envoy still in Paris, he was obliged to leave under threat of ejection by the police.

The pacific trend which had also begun to sweep England by the spring of 1801 found its motivation in considerations similar to those which influenced French policy. Without allies on the Continent the war against France could only end in a stalemate — but the era of coalitions seemed to have passed. The feeling on the Continent had, in fact, become more anti-British than anti-French, the result partly of the unpopularity of England's practices at sea, partly of the growing conviction that it was too frequently her policy to inveigle others into doing her fighting for her. "The dominant principle of European politics," says Gentz in a contemporary memorandum, "and the dominant principle of all the political thinkers and writers is at this moment — the jealousy of British power."⁶

Britain had also nearly reached the limit of what she could hope in the way of colonial conquests, and the prolongation of the struggle did not seem to promise more in this direction. Moreover, in spite of the ignominious collapse of the League of

⁴ Arrêt consulaire of April 12 (April 2), 1801. *Corr.*, VII, no. 5526.

⁵ Letter to Berthier of April 12, 1801: "Vous ferez attention qu'il (l'arrêt) est antidaté de dix jours: cela est fait avec intention." *Ibid.*, VII, no. 5525.

⁶ Carysfort to Grenville, Nov. 12, 1800. *Manuscripts of J. B. Fortescue*, VI, 375.

Armed Neutrality, her commerce was still excluded from many of the continental markets in which she was the most interested; only peace could hold out the hope of readmission to them. Portugal, the last of the proud array of allies she had marshaled against revolutionary France, was now on the point of being coerced into deserting her cause. After almost a year of urging by the First Consul,⁷ Spain had agreed to a treaty by which she was obligated to send an ultimatum to Portugal demanding an immediate peace with France, the exclusion of British and the admission of French and Spanish shipping, and the occupation of a fourth of her territory by Spanish troops as a guarantee for the return of Malta, Trinidad, and Minorca by England in the general peace.⁸ After a few weeks of mock campaigning under the quixotic leadership of Godoy, the Portuguese, greatly dreading the approach of the French auxiliary corps, came to terms in the treaty of Badajoz of June 6.⁹ The province of Olivenza was ceded to Spain, their ports closed to the English, and an indemnity of twenty million francs paid to France. The First Consul was furious to learn that the desired basis for the negotiations with England had been neglected, but the situation was such as to leave him no choice but to put up with what his ally had done.

Pitt and Grenville were not the men to throw themselves wholeheartedly into the kind of crusade on principle which Burke so passionately advocated. Unlike the great orator, they were perfectly willing to go to war "over a river," always providing that it was a primary British interest. In France it had in fact always been taken for granted that Britain was motivated solely by practical considerations of national policy. During Arthur Young's journeys to France in the early years of the Revolution he was repeatedly struck by the curious unanimity of opinion in both liberal and reactionary circles upon one point:

⁷ *Corr.*, VI, nos. 5034, 5120, 5165, 5258, 5327; VII, nos. 5365, 5426.

⁸ Convention of Madrid, Jan. 4, 1801. De Clercq, *Recueil des traités de la France*, I, 420-423.

⁹ G. de Martens, *Recueil des traités*, VII, 348-351.

that the activities of British agents were largely responsible for the increasing disorder and anarchy. There was indeed actual dread of a sudden attack which would take advantage of and accelerate the national catastrophe. The government at least made a show of sharing this apprehension, for when as a consequence of the "October Days" it proved advisable to send the Duke of Orleans into temporary exile, the ostensible reason for his departure was a mission to ascertain the true intentions of the court of London.¹⁰

Among the most controversial problems of English history during this period is the question as to whether the retirement of Pitt's cabinet was motivated by the desire to avoid the personal humiliation which its members would have experienced if obliged to negotiate the peace with France, the resignation on the Irish question being merely a strategic gesture. Pitt, Grenville, Windham, Canning, Dundas — these were the names of men whose voices had been raised too often in demanding a settlement very different from the best now to be anticipated. The above view of their departure is that suggested among others by the most eminent French historians, who do not hesitate to insinuate that Pitt wished to avoid committing himself entirely to the peace policy, in order to have his hands free in case of his return to power.¹¹ An interpretation more favorable to Pitt is that he left office in order to facilitate negotiations by a cabinet not traditionally hostile to France. After all, the chief importance of the question is for English political history, and affects us only in so far as Pitt and his associates continued

¹⁰ In the instructions prepared for Orleans under the date of Oct. 13, 1789, the conviction was expressed that "... la cour de Londres envisage avec une grande satisfaction nos embarras intérieurs, et qu'elle fait de vœux pour qu'ils soient prolongés." "Le premier objet des recherches de M. le Duc d'Orleans," the instructions went on to say, "sera de decouvrir si, et jusqu'à quel point, la cour de Londres a cherché à fomentier nos troubles; quels moyens et quels agents Elle a employés." Orleans was also to endeavor to ascertain whether Britain was inclined to take advantage of the moment to go to war, making special inquiries as to possible military preparations. A.E., ANGLETERRE, supplément 15, no. 23.

¹¹ Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution française*, VI, 100-101; Driault, *Napoléon et l'Europe: la politique extérieure*, pp. 162-163.

to influence English policy. It is also significant for us that the Addington cabinet was hardly more than a stopgap, and as such was never in a position adequately to represent either the nation or its ruling elements.¹²

The negotiations between France and England had been officially begun on March 22 by Lord Hawkesbury, the new Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The French representative was Otto, one of the ablest diplomats the Republic then possessed, who had been at London for some time, ostensibly to arrange for the exchange of prisoners. The negotiations dragged on for over six months, the continual changes in the general situation being the cause of numerous variations in the pretensions of the two powers. Generally speaking, the situation was continually becoming worse for the French, the setbacks in Egypt having an especially disastrous effect. Here, however, the First Consul had the benefit of more direct information, a circumstance of great advantage to him during the concluding phase of the negotiations. On September 17, on receipt of the news that the surrender of Menou's army was imminent, Otto was ordered to declare to the British government that hostilities would be resumed if a settlement were not reached by October 2. Finally, on the first day of October, 1801, the preliminary treaty was signed which called a temporary halt to the long struggle — on the morrow there arrived in London from Sir John Hutchinson a dispatch of August 27, communicating Menou's offer to capitulate.

The news of the signature of the preliminaries of peace was greeted with mixed feelings by the British nation. To the mass of the people it was certainly a source of satisfaction and gave rise to hilarious enthusiasm. Far less favorable were the reactions of the ruling classes. The contrast in the views of Pitt and the other ex-members of the war cabinet became more evi-

¹² How convenient the retirement on the Irish question appeared even to members of Pitt's cabinet is shown by a statement made by Dundas to Thomas Pelham: "If these new ministers stay in and make peace, it will only smooth matters the more for us afterwards." Malmsbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 41.

dent than ever, as did the close relation of Pitt to the Addington government. Even before the conclusion of the peace became public Pitt had communicated the news to George Rose, describing the terms as "on the whole advantageous and certainly creditable to the country."¹³ In marked opposition to this view, Grenville freely prophesied the temporary nature of the reconciliation and withdrew all support from the government.¹⁴ Windham wrathfully denounced the joy of the "swinish multitude" — in Parliament he accused his friends who had made the treaty of having signed the death warrant of their country.¹⁵

The most ominous portent was the unanimity of agreement that nothing substantial had been achieved in regard to those points about which Britain had been most deeply concerned. During the past years the leaders of the government had repeatedly stressed the conformity of their war aims with the traditional and fundamental principles of British foreign policy. Thus Grenville had declared that the war was being fought, not for this or that province, but on "whether the French should possess the whole of the maritime coast of the continent opposite to this country."¹⁶ To Canning the great purpose of the war had been "the deliverance of Europe," a restatement in more idealistic terms of the hoary balance of power principle. Pitt, whom the rest usually characterized as "too pacific," had most frequently limited himself to the formula "indemnity for the past, security for the future." Assuredly little enough of either was to be discovered in the peace.¹⁷ In the words of

¹³ George Rose, *Diaries and Correspondence* (1860), I, 429.

¹⁴ On Oct. 14 he wrote to Addington: "Public duty will compel me to express in Parliament my deep regret at the manner in which these negotiations have been terminated, and my conclusion of the absolute necessity of providing, by all possible means of precaution and preparation, against the new and imminent dangers to which I fear the country is exposed." Buckingham, *Memoirs of the Court and Cabinets of George III*, III, 178.

¹⁵ W. Windham, *The Windham Papers* (1913), II, 174, 178.

¹⁶ March 27, 1797. *Parl. Hist.*, XXXIII, 193.

¹⁷ In spite of this, Pitt on November 3 defended the treaty in the Commons against the attacks of Thomas Grenville, saying that the chief object of the war, the security of England, had been attained, and that there was every prospect for a long peace.

Hawkesbury it was simply "as good as circumstances would permit." Thus even in the cabinet there was little real faith in the permanence of the settlement. "In the present state of France," one member had assured another only a month before, "I would not give a twelvemonth's purchase for *any peace, however fair on the face of it*. . . . At the same time we certainly require a *breathing space* and the people will not be satisfied without the name of it."¹⁸ Then, when we consider that George III, the only sincere supporter upon whom Addington could absolutely depend, spoke of the peace as "experimental" and could only justify it on the ground that it was "unavoidable,"¹⁹ it becomes a source of surprise to us that the settlement ever reached a definitive stage.

On the French side the approval of the preliminary treaty was more nearly universal, the only group which showed any displeasure at the end of the war being those who had most to hope from its continuance, the leaders of the army.²⁰ It is indeed unfortunate that the Parisians, perhaps a trifle weary of the continuous procession of startling events, did not show the degree of enthusiasm the First Consul had anticipated. Aside from being a cause of considerable chagrin at the moment, it left with him the impression that the nation would readily respond if called again to war upon "the new Carthage."

For Bonaparte and Talleyrand the peace must indeed have represented the glorious achievement of the mission which the Consular government had set itself at the time of its creation. The consummate diplomacy of the closing weeks of the

¹⁸ Charles Yorke, Secretary for War, to Charles Abbot, Chief Secretary for Ireland. Quoted in A. Broadley and H. Wheeler, *Napoleon and the Invasion of England* (1908), I, 258.

¹⁹ Malmsbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 65.

²⁰ On Jan. 25, 1802, young George Jackson, the brother of the British envoy at Paris during the Amiens negotiations, wrote in his diary: "The Generals, who have become dissatisfied with Bonaparte on account of the 'premature peace,' have sought to alienate the affections of his guards; and many well-informed persons think the army is not to be relied upon." *Diaries and Letters*, I, 56.

negotiation amply redeemed what may have been lost by dilatory tactics during the spring and summer. Egypt had been lost, but in giving her renunciation France had been able to make three distinct bargains, with England, with Russia, and with the Porte itself, obtaining from each a valuable consideration in exchange for a mere nonentity, being the supposed lien of the French upon Egypt, from which they had been driven before the signing of any of the treaties. They had all been concluded within a space of ten days with negotiators ignorant of the fact that Menou had surrendered more than a month previously, while the First Consul coolly treated with them as if he still had everything to offer in this regard. While the Anglo-French treaty was only provisional in character, it bore in each of its terms such a stamp of finality that only an unpredictable convulsion in the European situation could have brought about any material change. By the liberality of the preliminaries the French had gained such an immense advantage in the negotiation of the definitive treaty itself, that they were in an excellent position to refuse any further concessions of importance. By the release of 25,000 French and 10,000 Dutch and Spanish prisoners, Britain had so impaired her naval supremacy, that a renewal of the war would have been infinitely more hazardous than the mere continuation of the struggle on October 1. An equally disadvantageous feature from the English point of view was the freedom permitted France to prepare and dispatch an expedition for the subjugation of the revolted Negroes of Santo Domingo. "The existence of that body of troops within a few days' sail of Jamaica, or the certainty of their arrival at such a position is a powerful weapon at Amiens," lamented Lord Minto to Sir Arthur Paget.²¹ But the most serious defect of all was the inability of the Addington cabinet to assert Britain's right to a voice in the settlement of continental affairs. It has been said with much justice that such a demand being out of accord with the relative position

²¹ *Paget Papers* (1896), II, 31.

of the two powers, it was wiser for the English government not to commit itself irrevocably thereto. Yet the situation at the time of the Treaty of London was such that it would have been far easier for England than for France to postpone the settlement. In their anxiety to secure an early peace Addington and Hawkesbury in effect renounced all chance for a permanent one.

On October 10 Joseph Bonaparte was appointed to represent the Republic at Amiens. This "secretary for signature" in his brother's cabinet was certainly not a brilliant negotiator, but he was at least a match for the honorable and distinguished gentleman whom the English government chose to oppose to him. Lord Cornwallis was certainly a man of much military and administrative experience, but he possessed neither particular aptitude nor preparation for diplomacy. His instructions demonstrate the particularistic and narrow view which had characterized British policy during the negotiation of the preliminary treaty. The coöperation of France was to be solicited to bring pressure upon Prussia for the evacuation of Hanover; an indemnity was to be sought for the Prince of Orange for the loss of his possessions in Holland; and an effort was to be made to bring the French to evacuate Piedmont.²² The instructions given Joseph show in turn how determined the First Consul was to conserve the full benefit of the definite character of the preliminaries, proving also how little inclined he was to seek a complete solution of all basic differences.

It is necessary to anticipate [says Talleyrand, by whom they were drawn up] that the British government may wish . . . to recall the interests of the King of Sardinia, to meddle in the affairs of Holland, of Italy, and of Germany, and to take its stand on former treaties since the Treaty of Utrecht, a pretension which would hide more than one afterthought, particularly that of placing obstacles before any advantages which we might gain in America by special arrangements.

As for the pretension which one can ascribe to the British government of wishing to drag into the discussions at Amiens matters

²² Instructions prepared by Hawkesbury, Nov. 1, 1801. Cornwallis, *Correspondence* (1859), III, 388 ff.

concerning the King of Sardinia, the establishment of the French at Flushing, the navigation of the Scheldt, the maintenance of a certain number of French troops by the Batavian, Cisalpine, and other Republics, finally, to seek some connection with the affairs of Germany, these are points upon which it will be necessary to wait, meanwhile preparing to reject all discussion and any insertion in the treaty respecting them.

Similarly, if, as happened in 1783, the British government demands that the treaty to be concluded should formally recall former treaties since that of Utrecht, it will not be necessary to consent to this. . . . The calling back of previous treaties would have for its principal object the placing of a contradiction into that which is about to be concluded, a sort of public protest against what we have obtained or may obtain in America. As a matter of fact, this war has been too general in its effects, too extraordinary in its results, for any of the old arrangements to become the basis of the new relations which it is the question of establishing.

I would add that if the British ministry similarly proposes the insertion of a clause relating to the re-establishment of commercial relations of such a nature that they would be placed upon the same footing as they were before the war, it would also be necessary to reject it, since the last treaty of commerce has been the object of so much outcry that it is a question which must be gone over again in its totality.²³

There is much justification for the contention that these instructions removed from the negotiations all the points which would have served for a sound and permanent settlement not only of the differences which divided the greatest continental from the greatest maritime power, but also of the factors which most seriously disturbed the European equilibrium. Yet one must not ignore the consideration that a truly lasting arrangement was then impossible, for even a comparatively passive France enjoyed such predominance upon the continent that any real balance was quite out of the question. Bonaparte, for he was the actual source of the instructions which Talleyrand had formulated, was perfectly correct when he held that the old European state system, as established in the great treaties of the two previous centuries, had given place to an entirely

²³ A. Du Casse, *Histoire des négociations diplomatiques relatives aux traités de Mortfontaine, de Lunéville, et d'Amiens* (1855), III, 3-18.

new alignment, a situation which even some of the British leaders were prepared to recognize.²⁴

After a brief sojourn at Paris, where he learned something of the views of the First Consul, Cornwallis repaired to Amiens and took up the thread of negotiations with Joseph Bonaparte. The relation between the two was a most cordial one, though the distrust felt by the British for the members of the French government, particularly Talleyrand, was hardly conducive to the creation of an atmosphere of frankness and friendliness. On one occasion the English envoy speaks of "the spirit of chicanery and intrigue which the Minister of the Exterior so eminently possesses";²⁵ at London the expressions describing the ex-bishop were much less flattering. Bonaparte, on his part, was absolutely determined that he would make no concessions beyond those of the preliminaries, when he had been very careful that they should not cost *him* anything. In the London treaty England had acquired Ceylon from Holland and Trinidad from Spain, although Talleyrand, to lessen the humiliation of her allies, had tried to represent the renunciation of Egypt as a parallel sacrifice made by France. Every French colony had been restored, the British also contracting to evacuate Malta and the Cape of Good Hope.

It was the fate of the old stronghold of the Knights of St. John which became the chief bone of contention at Amiens. It had only been with the greatest reluctance that the British government had consented to relinquish the island, and many of the bitterest opponents of the Treaty of London had concentrated their criticism on this point. Thus Lord Auckland

²⁴ Seven months later (April 8, 1802), when Pitt already envisaged the renewal of the war with France, he admitted to Malmsbury that the continental treaties from that of Münster to the peace of 1783 "had been so completely done away by those of Campo Formio and Luneville, that it was idle to consider them as in force." Malmsbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 69.

²⁵ To Hawkesbury, Nov. 20, 1801. Cornwallis, *Correspondence*, III, 393. Joseph Bonaparte, on the other hand, is characterized by Cornwallis as "a very sensible, modest, gentlemanlike man, totally free from diplomatic chicanery, and fair and open in all his dealings." To Major-General Ross, Dec. 15, 1801. *Ibid.*, III, 413.

called its most vulnerable part ". . . the giving up of Malta, which was infinitely the most valuable of our conquests, and which, when once abandoned by us, is lost forever, though at all times liable, as before, to be gained by French intrigue. And thus we have exposed the Turkish Empire, our Turkish and Italian trade, Egypt and the East Indies."²⁰ Now that Malta was to be given up, it was naturally of the greatest interest to England to place the safety of the island under such an effective guarantee that any designs of France concerning it would be placed beyond the reach of accomplishment. The final arrangement provided for the collective guarantee of Russia, Prussia, Spain, and Austria, but the efforts of Bonaparte to hedge on the sanctions preserving the neutrality of Malta made a very unfavorable impression on his opponents, which was to have serious consequences later.

That the Congress of Amiens dragged on for almost half a year and then accomplished little more than the recapitulation of the preliminary treaty was a matter of more surprise to contemporaries than it can be to us. The principal cause for delay was, on the British side, the desire to secure more favorable conditions than those of the Treaty of London, on the French, the absolute determination to make no further concessions. An effective feature of Bonaparte's policy was his habit of making large counter-claims whenever the English asked for something, thus making Cornwallis feel exceedingly unsafe as soon as he ventured on new ground.

The repetition of the proposal of our keeping Tobago [he wrote plaintively] which the First Consul had before told me he considered disgraceful, and to which he most especially declared he would never consent, and the insertion of the clause respecting the Prince of Orange gave an opening to the introduction of new matter of every species, *and of this the French Government has not failed to avail themselves most completely.* The security of Portugal against the operation of the Treaty of Madrid, and our refusal to make any cessions at New-

²⁰ Auckland to Lord Clare, Oct. 12, 1801. W. Auckland, *The Journal and Correspondence of Lord Auckland* (1862), IV, 137.

foundland or in the Fisheries, . . . cannot be better maintained than by a strict adherence to the *preliminaries*.²⁷

Bonaparte was very firmly resolved to make no concessions which would seem to admit that the advantage in the late war had been on the English side. His position in France depended upon his prestige; throughout his career it played a far greater part in his calculations than the particular interests under consideration. Under such circumstances there was little choice for the English government but either to accept the basic features of the preliminaries with such few favorable interpretations as Bonaparte was willing to admit, or to risk the prospect of a renewal of war. The members of the Addington cabinet were not yet prepared to face the latter alternative: on March 25, 1802, Cornwallis affixed his signature to the Treaty of Amiens.²⁸

The response in England to the news of the conclusion of the definitive treaty was far less favorable than the reception of the preliminaries had been. At that time, less than six months before, Colonel Lauriston, bringing the French ratification to London, had been drawn by a madly enthusiastic crowd through the streets of the city, while bitter-enders like William Cobbett were having their windows smashed for refusing to illuminate in celebration of the occasion. By the beginning of March the situation had so changed that John Talbot could write from London: "One opinion I find almost universal, namely, that should the peace be definitely made, it could not be of long duration. The mercantile world is under great alarm and commerce nearly at a standstill."²⁹ Malmsbury, who on the day after the signature at Amiens (that is, before the fact was known in London) had replied to a request of the Duke of York for news, "Peace, Sir, in a week, and war in a month," was soon after congratulated as "a great prophet" by the King, who re-

²⁷ To Hawkesbury, Dec. 27, 1801. Cornwallis, *Correspondence*, III, 419.

²⁸ G. de Martens, *Recueil des traités*, VII, 404-413.

²⁹ To the Marquis of Buckingham, March 8, 1802. Buckingham, *Memoirs of the Court and Cabinets of George III*, III, 198-199.

marked: "I believe your prediction to be true, . . . the first half is already fulfilled, and I suspect the other will not fail."³⁰ Even the Whigs were pessimistic and did not scruple to voice their fears in the Commons. To Grey the peace was "by far the most dangerous" England had ever made, to Sheridan one "of which every man should be glad but not one proud." Fox, a more cynical partisan, expressed his keen pleasure at "the triumph of the French Government over the English." Nowhere do we find a trace of genuine satisfaction or optimism, a disposition which augured ill for the future.

While the news of the conclusion of the definitive treaty hardly created much vocal enthusiasm in France, there can be no doubt but that it met with universal approbation. As for the First Consul, the peace was too great a personal triumph to provoke in him any reaction other than satisfaction. It freed him from an enemy whom he could not reach; it afforded him the time and opportunity to build up a great colonial system, to revive the overseas commerce of France, and to restore her navy; last, and probably most important, it gave him a free hand on the continent to continue the spread of French domination over Central and Southern Europe. Just how permanent he wished and expected the peace to be is of course another question.

³⁰ Malmsbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 72.

CHAPTER IV

THE INAUGURATION OF THE GERMAN REVOLUTION

THE reconstruction of Germany after the Peace of Luneville has frequently been compared to a revolution, for though the Holy Roman Empire did not receive its official burial until 1806, it was the Imperial Recess of 1803 which really brought it to its end. But it is not the passing of that antiquated shadow which constitutes the epoch-making nature of the development Germany underwent in the momentous years following the wars of the Second Coalition. The Recess was only the physical manifestation of a process which found its origin in the growing conviction that the French Revolution had discredited worn-out institutions. Germany had by no means become nationally self-conscious. Her chief intellectual as well as her principal political trends were in fact contrary to the ideal of national union. Intellectually she inclined to cosmopolitanism, politically to particularism — forces equally irreconcilable with national sentiments, national interests, and national destiny.

The immediate effect of the reconstruction of the years 1801 to 1803 was a partial achievement of the aims of both particularists and cosmopolites. The last loose bonds of union were swept away at the moment that Germany was brought directly into the Corsican's path of empire. The ultimate developments of the period, however, gave Germany sufficient cohesion to enable her, on a future day, to apply her weight in the European balance.

The traditional policy of France toward Germany had three main objectives: first, the achievement of the "natural" boundaries by the acquisition of the left bank of the Rhine; second, the maintenance of the anarchic conditions within the Empire by championing the "Germanic liberties," that is, the privileges and independence of the secondary states; third, the neutraliza-

tion of any effective action by either of the great German powers, Austria and Prussia, through alliances with the states beyond, Sweden, Poland, and Turkey. The revolutionary era, however, had worked such tremendous changes throughout Europe, that most of the old policies needed extensive, in some cases drastic, revision. Poland had disappeared altogether and given place to Russia, herself a potential rival in German affairs. Sweden and Turkey, which no longer could be aroused to operate against Austria, might still be turned against the eastern colossus. Most important of all, France had now gained the Rhine frontier and with it a position from which she could hope in time to dominate Germany. The feudal and ecclesiastical structure of the Empire had already lost three western pillars in the electoral archbishoprics, and southern Germany was leaning toward the fall into the French circle of influence. Austria, weakened and discredited, could do little to save the tottering structure, while Prussia had folded her hands in shamefaced resignation since the conclusion of the Treaty of Basel.

In the main the policy of the Consulate in Germany did not differ materially from that forecast by the revolutionary leaders. It was limned by Sieyès to the Committee of Public Safety in March, 1795, when he represented the attainment of the natural boundaries as essential for any permanent peace upon the continent. As necessary corollaries he stressed the removal of Austria and Prussia from the Rhine and the indemnification of the princes losing territory on the left bank by the abolition of the ecclesiastical principalities on the other, a mere "bouleversement d'un tas de sable." Sieyès even went so far as to draw up a plan of indemnities remarkably similar to that adopted in 1803.¹ The old maxim, "he who would maintain himself on the Rhine must cross to the other side," asserted itself thus early and with new force, in spite of the fact that no physical aggression on its further bank was yet thought of.

¹ On the ideas of Sieyès see Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution française*, IV, 293-300.

The attainment of the cherished frontier could only intensify the old French custom of interfering in the affairs of the Holy Roman Empire.

To settle the affairs of Germany in accordance with his views, the First Consul had to face two primary problems: first, to make his choice between the two German powers so as to secure the effective assistance of one of them, particularly in regard to operations in the German Diet; second, to assure himself of the coöperation, or at least the passive acquiescence, of Russia. As regards the former there could hardly be much question. To gain the free and sincere renunciation of what they had lost to France, it would be necessary to compensate the German princes as handsomely as possible, particularly as the Consular government also hoped to attach them to its interests in the future. For some time Austria, through Louis Cobenzl, had been pleading at Paris that the secularization should be kept at the very minimum, while Prussia, now that the restoration of her former possessions was no longer possible, recommended the complete destruction of the ecclesiastical states.² In every other respect Prussia also offered greater promise as an ally and partner. Since the time of Frederick the Great she had sunk from a European to a German and finally to a North German power. Her line of demarcation had developed into a self-denying ordinance, which isolated her from the area of conflict and left France a free hand in South Germany.³

Before the death of Paul I the adhesion of Russia to a French project of mediation in Germany seemed more than probable, particularly as the Tsar had become very hostile to Austria. But with the accession of Alexander, the relations between France and Russia, in this as in other respects, entered upon a new plane. Austria, on her part, saw in the change of sovereign

² Report of Bacher (French envoy to the Imperial Diet) of 5 thermidor an IX (July 23, 1800). A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 702, fol. 496.

³ The significance of the Hanoverian problem for Prussia is given detailed consideration in G. S. Ford, *Hanover and Prussia, 1795-1803* (1903).

in Russia the long-sought opportunity to escape from her isolation. In a more hopeful tone than he had employed for some time Emperor Francis wrote to Cobenzl:

We shall endeavor to make Russia enter into our views and our interests, in order to obtain from France the strict execution of the treaties and to restrain Prussia from her views of immoderate aggrandizement, while with the latter power we will hold to a cautious policy in order to avoid all occasion for misunderstandings and at the same time to sound her intentions.⁴

If Austria could assure herself of the friendship of Russia, Prussia, and England, she would have less to fear from France.⁵ To gain that of the continental powers two special missions were decided upon: Prince Schwarzenberg was to go to St. Petersburg to congratulate the Tsar upon his accession and to sound Russia on the question of a new alliance, while Count Stadion, one of the ablest diplomats in the Austrian service, was selected to make an attempt at an arrangement with the court of Berlin. Yet, so fearful was Austria of losing the chance of a French connection without being able to substitute another, that Cobenzl was simultaneously instructed to renew his proposals for reviving the system of 1756.

Schwarzenberg was well received in the Russian capital. But when the Russians requested him to make definite proposals, he found himself limited by his instructions to vague declarations of amity. Before long the Tsar began to doubt the sincerity of Austria's intentions, a disposition which made him peculiarly receptive to the tactics employed by the First Consul. Even before the death of Paul, Duroc had been selected for a mission to St. Petersburg to present his master's complaints on the conduct of Kalytcheff, but the nominal objective had since been

⁴The above is quoted by Fournier (*Gentz und Cobenzl*, pp. 21-22) from instructions supposedly signed by the Emperor on May 15, 1801. Though instructions of that date exist in the Vienna archives, the words here quoted are not found therein. The sense of the existing document is nearly identical.

⁵"S'il nous réussit d'être bien avec ces trois Cours, nous aurons moins à craindre du gouvernement français." Colloredo to Thugut, May 26, 1801. S.-A., GROSSE KORRESPONDENZ, 447, fol. 106-107.

changed to the felicitation of the new ruler.⁶ He was provided with instructions that sum up with simple clarity the rôle which Russia was henceforth to assume in the French system. To the young Tsar the envoy is to reveal the perseverance of Austria in her propositions for an alliance with the Republic, insinuating that its conclusion depends solely upon the First Consul. Duroc is to emphasize the interest taken by his chief in the aggrandizement of Alexander's German relatives. In particular he is to make every effort to turn the eyes of the Russians from Italy to the affairs of Germany and to the possibility of limitless aggrandizement in the Near East: "Speak of Catherine II as of a princess who foresaw the fall of the Turkish Empire and who realized that there would be no prosperity for Russian commerce until it found an outlet in the South."⁷ Once more we are confronted with the ever recurring paradox that the ambitions of France and Russia in the Levant constituted the chief factor of union as well as division between the two states, for neither could satisfy its pretensions without the consent or participation of the other.

Duroc's arrival at St. Petersburg came at a time not unfavorable to the accomplishment of the objectives of his mission. The influence of Panin, under which Alexander had signed with England the Convention of June 17 and abandoned the cardinal principles of the League of Armed Neutrality, was now on the wane. As long as it had remained paramount Alexander was inclined to follow a hands-off policy in regard to German questions, but with the eclipse of the Francophobe minister the field was left open to the Tsar's relatives of Württemberg, Baden, and Bavaria. So, when Maximilian Joseph of Bavaria appealed to Alexander for his assistance in securing a favorable indemnity, the Tsar readily promised to interest himself in his behalf.⁸ Until Duroc's arrival Alexander appears to have expected to settle the whole matter in conjunction with Prussia

⁶ Bonaparte to Alexander I, April 26, 1801. *Corr.*, VII, no. 5550.

⁷ Instructions dated April 24, 1801. *Ibid.*, VII, no. 5545.

⁸ Alexander to Maximilian Joseph, Aug. 26, 1801. A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 703, fol. 46-47.

and Austria to the complete exclusion of France; a proposition to this effect had even been forwarded to Berlin.

The French envoy's revelation of Cobenzl's alliance proposals created the desired effect at St. Petersburg. The Tsar and his advisers were persuaded that the Austrians were playing a double game, a conviction which was strengthened by the unfavorable reports of Count Muraviev, the special envoy of Russia at Vienna.⁹ Duroc was treated with the greatest consideration, Alexander taking delight in addressing him as "Citoyen."¹⁰ In September a new Russian envoy, Count Markov, arrived at Paris, and the negotiations for a definite peace between France and Russia were again taken up. In accordance with the desire of the First Consul, so strongly expressed in the negotiation with Kalytcheff, the settlement was divided into two parts: first, the mere formal declaration of peace and amity between the two powers; second, a secret convention in which the real conditions of the pacification and of the future relations between the two states were formulated. In the first article of the latter the contracting parties engaged themselves to arrive at a common accord in respect to the principles to be followed in arranging the question of the indemnities, their ostensible motive being ". . . to preserve the just equilibrium between the Houses of Austria and Brandenburg."¹¹ The most immediate aim of French policy, the assurance of Russian coöperation in the settlement of German affairs, had thus been gained.

The possibility of an Austro-Prussian rapprochement, on the basis of an accord on the indemnities question to the exclusion of the non-German powers, also soon proved illusory. Stadion had been received without notable enthusiasm at Berlin, but the Prussian cabinet was at least disposed to listen to what

⁹ "Il [Muraviev] s'amuse et court à Baden, ou il se trouve plus qu'en ville. Nous pouvons bien nous apercevoir qu'on travaille contre nous." Colloredo to Thugut, July 3, 1801 S.-A., GROSSE KORRESPONDENZ, 447, fol. 127-134.

¹⁰ Duroc's reports from St. Petersburg. A E., RUSSIE, 140, nos. 168-215.

¹¹ The public treaty of peace was signed on October 8 and the secret convention two days later. De Clercq, *Recueil des traités de la France*, I, 467-468, 474-475.

Austria had to offer. The proposals of the court of Vienna reflected the contradictory interests of the Hapsburgs in the question. As at Paris, they tried to reconcile a maximum indemnity for Archduke Ferdinand (the former Grand Duke of Tuscany) with a minimum estimate of the compensation due the states which had forfeited territories on the left bank of the Rhine. In addition, the Austrians came forward with the demand that the strip of Bavaria on the right bank of the Inn be added to the territories already selected for the Archduke. It was expected that Maximilian Joseph would be satisfied by a compensation consisting of secularized lands and some of the Austrian possessions in Swabia. This plan had been proposed to Cobenzl by Joseph Bonaparte, who promised French assistance as long as no coercion were employed.¹²

Acting immediately on this suggestion, the cabinet of Vienna had made advances to Bavaria. Though not enthusiastic, the Elector had agreed to send a special envoy to the Austrian capital, the individual chosen being General Wrede. But the propositions of the Hofburg went far beyond a mere plan of exchanges. Trautmannsdorff came forward with an intricate project, involving transfers of territory between Austria, Bavaria, and Prussia, and climaxed by the offer of an alliance between the former two.

One can imagine the surprise and disgust at Paris when the Bavarian minister informed the First Consul of these projects. It may be that Bonaparte had never been sincere in encouraging the Austrians to make overtures to Bavaria, desiring only to compromise them in their relations with the German states and to induce them to continue their advances for an understanding with France. Certainly he could not contemplate with equanimity a procedure which threatened to endanger the predominant voice of France in the approaching settlement of the indemnities question. On August 24, 1801, he concluded a separate treaty with Bavaria in which he undertook to use

¹² Cobenzl's report of June 1, 1801. S.-A., *FRANKREICH*, 262 (1801), VI, fol. 41-47.

his good offices to assure an advantageous "indemnity" to the court of Munich, it being well understood that it would be more than equal to what Austria was prepared to offer for the cession of one of the most valuable districts of the electorate.¹³ To reinforce this already strong argument against the proposals made to Wrede, the First Consul wrote to Maximilian Joseph, urgently advising him to reject them: "The proposition made to Your Highness by the House of Austria conforms so perfectly to the constant aims of that august House that it appears to me to be contrary to the interests of your own."¹⁴ The inevitable consequence of this procedure was to make the Bavarians less inclined than ever to take the bait held out to them from Vienna; the Hofburg was soon made to realize that nothing was to be hoped for in this quarter.

The chief immediate reason for coming to an accord with Prussia thus having disappeared, Austria was less than ever inclined to defer to her northern rival in the crisis that developed upon the death of the Archduke Maximilian, Electoral Archbishop of Cologne, Bishop of Münster, and Grand Master of the Teutonic Order. In the latter capacity he was succeeded by his coadjutor, Archduke Charles, but to France and Prussia it seemed advisable that the sees of Cologne and Münster ought to remain vacant, thus simplifying the plan of indemnities. In spite of the remonstrances of the cabinet of Berlin, the Austrians succeeded in securing the election of Archduke Antony, the youngest brother of the Emperor. Great was the triumph at Vienna over this cheap victory, while the ecclesiastical princes were delighted with this indication that there remained prospects of living out their terms and even having successors. The Bishop of Würzburg asked Austria for a coadjutor, and many of his fellows seemed inclined to do the same. Some of the more exuberant princes of the church even went the length of forwarding a memorial to the English government, in which they pointed out the danger of allowing

¹³ Treaty in G. de Martens, *Recueil des traités*, VII, 366.

¹⁴ Oct. 11, 1801. *Corr.*, VII, no. 5796.

the left bank of the Rhine to remain in French hands and the necessity of the European powers' supporting the Emperor in his views on how the Treaty of Luneville should be carried out.¹⁵ Thus it seemed as if on the one side the possession of the Rhine frontier were being called into question, while, on the other, Austria was controlling the succession to the majority of the ecclesiastical states.

Not only had Austria thus incurred the enmity and stiffened the opposition of France and Prussia to her program in the indemnities question, but her position among the secondary states had been equally changed for the worse. When the question had come up in the Diet for the first time, the large majority even of the secular states had been ready to defer to her. Saxony, which like the Viennese government wished no more than a strict indemnity for the territories actually lost, proposed that the plan be worked out by the whole Diet, but here the lay princes were afraid of being swamped by the clerics, free cities, and knights. Bavaria now suggested that the Emperor be entrusted with undertaking the negotiations with France, though he was to inform the Diet of all steps taken before concluding any definite arrangements with that country. On April 30 a *conclusum* was voted, inviting the Emperor to charge himself with all questions left in the peace of Luneville for special arrangement.¹⁶ This golden opportunity was thrown aside by Francis, his reply, after two months of delay, describing the powers granted him as insufficient for treating satisfactorily with France and demanding unlimited power to negotiate, the Diet reserving only its privilege of ratification. This proposition was met by a storm of opposition strongly encouraged by the French envoy, Bacher, so that nothing had been accomplished when that body adjourned in July.¹⁷ It was a time of indescribable confusion in Germany. The ecclesiastical princes, scenting

¹⁵ Beurnonville to Talleyrand, 11 vendémiaire an X (Oct. 3, 1801). A.E., PRUSSE, 230, no. 5.

¹⁶ A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 702, fol. 314.

¹⁷ Talleyrand instructed Bacher to arouse the fears of the dispossessed princes and then to support their complaints. *Ibid.*, 702, fol. 485.

their approaching doom, strove to realize upon everything on which they could lay their hands, cutting forests, selling or mortgaging state property, and borrowing wherever they could. The Imperial Chamber at Wetzlar, deprived of most of its resources by the cession of its properties on the left bank, found it impossible to pay its judges, though over forty thousand cases awaited trial.

When the Diet reassembled in the middle of August, 1801, the lay princes had become far less inclined to submit to an Austrian solution of the indemnities puzzle. General opinion now seemed to favor a deputation, a plan suggested by Austria herself when she realized that there would inevitably be a majority against any arrangement more favorable to her. On October 2 the Diet voted a *conclusum* in the form desired by Austria, which, after creating a deputation for the purpose of ". . . examining, treating, and regulating in concert with the French government, the objects which, according to Article VII of the Treaty of Luneville, have been reserved for special arrangement," added the significant instruction that it should observe "all measures, precautions, and reserves necessary for the maintenance of the Germanic Constitution in all its features."¹⁸ The deputation was to consist of Mainz, Bohemia, Saxony, and Brandenburg from the Electoral College, and Bavaria, the Teutonic Order, Württemberg, and Hesse-Cassel from the Princes.

Thus in these early days of October the question of the reconstruction of Germany was assuming the chief rôle in European politics. The signature of the preliminary treaty of peace with Great Britain had given the First Consul the leisure to turn his attention to continental affairs. The secret convention of October 10 assured him the coöperation of Russia, while Prussia had now resigned herself completely to the idea of having everything settled at Paris. The scramble of the secondary states for the favor of the French government had begun even before it became definitely known that Russia would join

¹⁸ A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 703, fol. 171.

France in a common mediation. During the early stages of the deliberations of the Diet more than one astute prince had divined that the golden harvest would be reaped at Paris and not at Regensburg. With this probability in mind they had wisely sown while the soil still promised a heavy return. Thus Count Beust, the minister of the aged Elector of Mainz, had as early as June 25, 1801, contracted signed agreements with certain "personnes essentielles" in the French government, according to which they would receive one million livres tournois if the Elector were maintained on the right bank of the Rhine with a stipulated amount of territory.¹⁹ Soon even such enormous sums were exceeded. Every little princeling either was himself in Paris or was adequately represented. The numberless stories of their antics in trying to ingratiate themselves with Talleyrand and his henchmen, particularly the Strasbourger, Mathieu, have provided tragi-comic relief from the more sordid aspects of the transactions which followed.²⁰ Certainly, Talleyrand, who opened the great land market, laid the foundation of his enormous fortune at this time.

But one must not think for a moment that the great conceptions upon which the policy of the First Consul was based owed their existence to the success of this or that bit of petty bribery. Seldom indeed was so much circumspection required in the separate relations with each power. It was necessary to keep Austria isolated, inactive, and only half conscious of what was going on, to satisfy Prussia that everything was being done with a view to her interests, while maintaining Russia in the illusion that she was the arbiter in chief. Never was the principle of "divide et impera" applied with more skill or to greater advantage. Bonaparte's own words will present us with

¹⁹ In the following year this sum was even raised to one million gulden (July 1, 1802). Karl, Freiherr von Beaulieu-Marconnay, *Karl von Dalberg und seine Zeit* (1879), I, 262-263.

²⁰ An excellent source for the details of the negotiations at Paris are the reports of Baden's minister, Reitzenstein, in Bernhard Erdmannsdörffer and Karl Obser's publication of the *Politische Korrespondenz Karl Friedrichs von Baden, 1783-1806* (1896), IV, nos. 62-148, 194-267.

a better picture of the objectives he had set himself than any others possibly could:

I desire to carry on three separate negotiations: one with Russia, to identify her, as far as possible, with those arrangements which are most convenient to us; the second with the court of Berlin to conclude all the arrangements which concern her, as well as the Prince of Orange, the Elector of Bavaria, and the Elector of Baden; the third with Austria, in order to conclude with her the arrangements relative to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, one, or, at most, two ecclesiastical electors, and the Elector of Bavaria. By these means, the German Empire finds itself really divided into two empires, since the affairs which concern it are arranged at two different centers. These arrangements made, does the German constitution still exist? Yes and no; yes, since it is not destroyed; no, since the settlements regarding it are not found in one single piece, and because, more than ever, disunion exists between Berlin and Vienna. Time will decide our future conduct.²¹

So successful had the First Consul been in misleading the cabinet of Vienna, that Cobenzl had continued to linger in Paris until the middle of September.²² Only the continued remonstrances of the Chancellor finally prevailed upon Francis to order his recall, for the intrigues of the court party had aimed to perpetuate the disorderly regime of Trautmannsdorff. "We cannot continue," declared the Emperor's instructions, "to treat directly and secretly with France without risking compromising ourselves before the other courts and to cause us to be suspected of a duplicity which would soon lose us what little confidence we have succeeded in regaining."²³ But the realization

²¹ To Talleyrand, April 3, 1802. *Corr.*, VII, no. 6019.

²² During the whole period of his stay only one concrete proposal was made to him, and that very little to the Hofburg's taste. It centered in the suggestion that friction between France and Austria would best be avoided if the latter got out of Italy, renouncing Venetia in favor of the former Grand Duke of Tuscany. The rather original arguments of the First Consul are presented in Cobenzl's report of May 19, 1801. *S.-A., FRANKREICH*, 262 (1801), V, fol. 48-63.

²³ Cobenzl himself had long been keenly aware of the impression which his extended visit to the French capital was bound to make upon the cabinets of Europe. As early as April we find him protesting to the First Consul that fur-

had come too late, for the damage, here only anticipated, had already been done.

Cobenzl arrived at Vienna on September 17 and immediately took up his duties as Vice-Chancellor in charge of the direct conduct of foreign affairs. The new minister freely recognized that only a happy combination of circumspection and energy could save anything from the wreck. In his view the salvation of Austria could be sought only in alliance with Russia, who alone seemed capable of providing her with any stable support against France. Not that Cobenzl as yet dreamed of a new coalition — aggrandizement for the moment was out of the question, and the cabinet of Vienna would then have been only too happy to find France sincerely pacific.²⁴ But his hopes were soon cruelly disappointed, for early in November, Razumovsky, the Russian ambassador at Vienna, communicated certain "Tableaux" on the indemnities question, which seemed to embody the principles most abhorrent to the Hofburg; a fairly general secularization, the recognition of the claims of the Prince of Orange, and a large indemnity for Prussia.²⁵ Soon after, Starhemberg reported from London that nothing was to be expected from the court of St. James, as it favored Prussia's plans for Orange. The isolation of Austria which Bonaparte had aimed at was thus bound to drive her back into the arms of France.

Meanwhile the deliberations were continuing at Paris, though the principal attention of the government was for the time

ther dalliance would give them "soupçons sur des Conventions secrètes de toute espèce." Report of April 19, 1801. S.-A., FRANKREICH, 262 (1801), IV, fol. 65-70.

²⁴ "Il [le cabinet de Vienne] songe à sa conservation plus qu'à son aggrandissement; il craint plus qu'il n'espère. Mais il sent le besoin qu'il a d'un appui; il le cherche dans la Russie qui lui a une fois donné un secours si efficace; . . . La France inspire toujours admiration et crainte; on désire qu'elle soit bien sincère dans ses dispositions pacifiques, on ose à peine y croire." Champagny to Talleyrand, 14 nivôse an X. A.E., AUTRICHE, 372, no. 121 (Jan. 4, 1802).

²⁵ On November 11 the "Tableaux" were sent to Philip Cobenzl with an expression of ". . . la peine qu'a éprouvé Sa Majesté d'apprendre que l'allié sur lequel Elle comptait le plus, se laissant entièrement entraîner par les suggestions prussiennes, se joint à cette cour pour achever d'anéantir la constitution germanique." Fournier, *Genz und Cobenzl*, p. 31.

being fixed on the Congress of Amiens. But while active negotiations were postponed, the time was advantageously employed in gathering information and laying down the principles upon which the plan was to be worked out. Talleyrand sent an agent by the name of Baudus into Germany to study the drift of public opinion. "On approaching Germany," reads one of his reports, "one can often hear the affair of the indemnities spoken of, and on the frontier it is an habitual subject of conversation. But what is then no more than a feeble noise becomes a kind of buzzing as soon as one enters any of the important cities of the Empire."²⁶ The wildest conjectures were rife in Germany, it being a golden opportunity for the Teutonic mind to engage in those intellectual gymnastics to which it is so frequently addicted. Many sincere patriots deplored the assignment of German territory to indemnify Italian princes and loudly demanded that the Ottoman Empire be made the scapegoat instead. The noise of this even got to Constantinople, where the French ambassador had to reassure the Reis-effendi (foreign minister).²⁷ The negotiations at Amiens were widely speculated upon as the locus of the decisions about Germany. Popular rumor went so far as to forecast a general congress in the old French town, and newspapers and periodicals vied with one another in speculation as to which statesmen would attend and what problems would be discussed. Nowhere in Europe was there greater astonishment than in Germany, when the Treaty of Amiens turned out to be little more than a recapitulation of the preliminary peace.

Immediately after the definitive peace with England, the German question assumed the center of the European stage.²⁸ Markov had already presented a Russian project, similar to

²⁶ Report of Sept. 19, 1801. A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 705, no. 126.

²⁷ Brune to the First Consul, 5 germinal an XI (March 26, 1803). A.E., TURQUIE, 206, no. 26.

²⁸ How much the issue of the Congress of Amiens had centered the attention of the Continent is expressed in a dispatch of Champagny's: "Le Congrès d'Amiens, sur lequel toute l'Europe a les yeux, tint tout en suspens; jusqu'à son issue, on n'ose former aucun projet, et à peine se permettre une opinion ou un vœu." 9 germinal an X (March 30, 1802). A.E., AUTRICHE, 372, no. 180.

that communicated to Vienna in the November "Tableaux," but what had then sufficed to shock the Hofburg into hysterical protests seemed much too pro-Austrian to the French and Prussians. Bonaparte leaned much more strongly toward a Prussian project of the previous October, which involved a detailed scheme of indemnities for all of the hereditary princes who had lost territories and the maintenance of only one of the ecclesiastical electors, probably at Regensburg.²⁹ In secret conferences between Markov and Talleyrand, to which the Prussian Lucchesini was at times admitted, the fate of Germany was decided. The Austrian diplomats were at last realizing that the First Consul was master of the situation, and Philip Cobenzl was instructed to make every effort to win him to their side. "Everything depends on Bonaparte," Louis Cobenzl wrote to his cousin. "He alone can draw any advantage he seeks out of the fate of Germany; we must therefore spare nothing to render him favorable to us."³⁰ But the Austrian ambassador was skillfully held at arm's length by Talleyrand, who assured him that his conferences with the Bavarian and Prussian ministers were motivated solely by the necessity of knowing their countries' "losses and pretensions," while whatever project that might be agreed upon with Russia would be offered to the Diet as mere "conseils."³¹ Though all his attempts to pump Markov were equally unsuccessful, the envoy continued to suspect the importance of the discussions which were going on.

By the middle of May, 1802, matters were pretty well decided at Paris, and the larger German states were beginning to conclude a series of treaties with the Republic, by which the nature and extent of their indemnities were quite definitely specified. Naturally enough, the most important of these was that between France and Prussia, in which the simple statement was

²⁹ Beurnonville to Talleyrand, 8 brumaire an X (Oct. 30, 1801). A.E., PRUSSE, 230, no. 35.

³⁰ Instructions of Feb. 28, 1802. A. Beer, *Zehn Jahre oesterreichischer Politik, 1801-1810* (1877), p. 32.

³¹ As told Champagny by Louis Cobenzl from his cousin's report. Dispatch of the former of the 25 messidor an X (July 14, 1802). A.E., AUTRICHE, 372,

made that the latter "acquired in full sovereignty" the territories enumerated and was privileged to occupy them immediately after the exchange of ratifications. It is a significant feature of Napoleonic diplomacy that this treaty, by which France so high-handedly decided the fate of lands which were not at her disposal, obliged the other contracting party to recognize the changes in Italy since the Peace of Luneville, inclusive of the still unconsummated annexation of Piedmont.³²

The negotiations between Talleyrand and Markov had by no means run an entirely untroubled course, not only because the court of St. Petersburg had from the first been opposed to a radically anti-Austrian arrangement, but also because the Russian envoy was personally hostile to the Consular government. More than once Talleyrand found it necessary to present complaints about his obstinacy to the Russian cabinet, usually by the indirect path of Alexander's German relatives. On June 3, 1802, the famous project, so significant in the evolution of modern Germany, was finally signed. Markov had been so fearful of having exceeded his instructions that he insisted on appending an article according to which the plan was to be first submitted to Alexander, while none of its contents were in the meantime to be communicated to any other government. But Bonaparte and Talleyrand were far too anxious about the reception of the project by the Tsar to take such an inconvenient engagement seriously. Markov had indeed confided to Baden's minister, Reitzenstein, his conviction that the arrangement would be drastically altered at St. Petersburg, where the huge Prussian indemnity would certainly be disavowed and the Austrian share in Swabia increased. "As one can thus easily divine the spirit of the report which Markov will send to his court, our fate rests upon the celerity with which we can forestall the machinations of this dangerous enemy," wrote the startled envoy.³³ This opinion was shared by the First Consul

³² May 23, 1802. De Clercq, *Recueil des traités*, I, 583-587.

³³ "Talleyrand et le Premier Consul me paraissent tous les deux également persuadés de la perfidie du Russe [i.e., Markov]." Reitzenstein to Edelsheim, June 4, 1802. Erdmannsdörffer and Obser, *Pol. Korr. Karl Friedrichs*, IV,

and his ministers, who decided to bring every possible kind of pressure upon the Tsar to ensure his ratification. On June 4 Talleyrand therefore called in the Prussian envoy, Lucchesini, gave him a copy of the entire plan, and urged him to employ all possible means to gain the approbation of Alexander. At the same time he wrote to Haugwitz:

The common interest of Prussia and of the Empire will undoubtedly prevail upon you to lose not an instant nor neglect any possible means to obtain from the Emperor Alexander a formal approbation without the slightest modification. You will judge by the communication of this important act how complete my confidence is; I flatter myself that it will not leave your hands and that, although fully informed of its contents, you will maintain the air of acting upon a simple hypothetical probability.³⁴

A letter strongly recommending the project was also sent Vice-Chancellor Kurakin,³⁵ while Reitzenstein and the Bavarian minister, Cetto, were stimulated to persuade their governments of the necessity of sending couriers "sur l'heure même" to St. Petersburg to plead for the acceptance of the complete scheme in the name of blood-relationship. "It is absolutely essential that you press the point and that the Empress finally show herself," Bonaparte himself told the Badenese envoy.³⁶

In these critical days Alexander, Frederick William, and Queen Louise were assembled in that romantic conference at Memel which left such a deep impression upon each of them. On the day after the sovereigns had taken leave of one another, the King received Haugwitz's report from Berlin, in which the critical features of the situation were fittingly stressed. As Alexander had in the course of the interview expressed his approval of the Franco-Prussian treaty of May 23, it seemed well to strike while the iron was hot. A personal letter from

³⁴ 15 prairial an X (June 4, 1801). A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 717, fol. 152-153.

³⁵ Talleyrand to Kurakin, 17 prairial an X (June 6, 1802). *Ibid.*, 717, fol. 154-155.

³⁶ Reitzenstein to Edelsheim, June 4, 1802. Erdmannsdörffer and Obser, *Pol. Korr. Karl Friedrichs*, IV, no. 145. See also no. 147 on the cross currents among the Tsar's South German relatives.

the King to the Tsar was drawn up by Lombard, probably the most influential of the Prussian councilors, in which Frederick William was made to say:

After the manner, forever engraved in my memory and in my heart, with which you received at Memel the communication of the engagements contracted towards me by France, I have no further wish to express on this point. But it is the ensemble of the stipulations of Paris which will fix the entire attention of Your Imperial Majesty. . . . Of whatever scrutiny, of whatever objection, the plan of the Comte de Markov may be susceptible, I believe that a greater evil would be that Your Imperial Majesty had superior reasons for refusing his sanction.³⁷

The courier entrusted with this epistle succeeded in reaching Alexander at Grodno, but both the Tsar and Kurakin felt that it would be beneath their dignity to allow themselves to be inconsiderately pressed. Alexander therefore replied that, not having with him any document by which he could verify the justice of the various indemnities, he would have to wait until after his return to St. Petersburg before making a final decision.³⁸ Yet the vain autocrat could not help being flattered by the favor shown his relatives, and his recent, more than cordial, relations with Prussia's royal family made rejection doubly difficult. On July 4 Kurakin accordingly wrote to Talleyrand, accepting the project in its entirety, and asking only that additional consideration be shown the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, who desired the electoral hat, and the Prince Bishop of Lübeck, who was pleading for a better personal establishment.³⁹ Mathieu, who had been waiting at Strasbourg, caught up the news of Russia's ratification there and hurried off to Regensburg, so that Laforest could with the least possible delay present the official notification of the Franco-Russian project to the Deputation of the Imperial Diet. The German Revolution had entered upon its final phase.

³⁷ June 17, 1802. P. Bailieu, *Briefwechsel, König Friedrich Wilhelm III, und der Königin Luise mit Kaiser Alexander I* (1900), no. 19.

³⁸ June 25, 1802. Bailieu, *Briefwechsel*, no. 20.

³⁹ Kurakin to Talleyrand, July 4, 1802. A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 717, fol. 191-192.

CHAPTER V

THE RAPE OF THE HOLY EMPIRE

THE six weeks which followed the conclusion of the convention of June 3 were a time of great anxiety in Paris and Berlin. It was undoubtedly fortunate for Bonaparte's policy that he had been so successful in keeping Austria in the dark about the significance of what was going on, since she was unable to make representations to Russia until it was in effect too late. So desperate had the cabinet of Vienna been for news of the true state of affairs that it had had recourse to the expedient of intercepting the correspondence of the Prussian minister, Keller.¹ From this it had been perfectly clear that some kind of agreement had been reached between France and Russia, with which (ominous portent) the Prussians appeared to be entirely satisfied, but it was only on June 29, upon receipt of a dispatch which Philip Cobenzl had written on the twentieth, that the Hofburg was able to perceive the full compass of the arrangement. The ambassador himself had only learned of it that day from — the *Moniteur*! When he bitterly reproached Markov for his duplicity, the Russian vigorously denied having "signed anything." Talleyrand more readily admitted the truth of the whole affair, but threw all the blame on the Russians, who, he said, had re-

¹The interception of the dispatches of foreign envoys by Austrian agents was by no means limited to this occasion, but was usually confined to smaller fry. The correspondence of the chief cabinets was usually too closely guarded to permit easy tampering. Thus, at an earlier date Colloredo speaks quite casually about information gained from opening the letters of Danish and other diplomats, while in the same breath he expresses his anxiety to know what sort of reports the Russian Muraviev is sending home (To Thugut, July 3, 1801. S.-A., GROSSE KORRESPONDENZ, 447, fol. 127-134). That the practice was not peculiar to the Austrians can be inferred from the orders given Duroc on his departure for St. Petersburg. He was to write as if all his letters were to be read "by the Emperor and all his ministers and by the King of Prussia and all his ministers" (*Corr.*, VII, no. 5545). It is to be noted that his dispatches were not entrusted to any ordinary post, but were carried by official French couriers.

fused to allow the participation of Austria in the negotiation. The imperturbable reserve and self-possession of Talleyrand is so much the more amazing in view of the fact that at the time when the negotiations were reaching their climax, Philip Cobenzl not only saw him every day at his hotel at Neuilly, but frequently passed the entire night in a chamber assigned to him expressly to "facilitate" his relations with the French minister.²

The court of Vienna might well be aghast at the revolution to which the German constitution was to be subjected, for the props upon which the vestiges of the imperial system had rested were ruthlessly swept away. The number of German states was reduced by half, the ecclesiastical electors from three to one, the clerical votes in the College of Princes from thirty-four to two, and the free cities from fifty-two to six. In general the lands had been knocked down to three classes of petitioners: those who had bid the most, clients of Russia and Prussia, and those states which Bonaparte had determined to make the props of his German system. Compensation for actual loss had scarcely been considered as a claim. Thus Baden received over eight times the value of the territories she had lost. The only other secondary state to receive a proportionate increase was Bavaria, the sole South German state which could lay claim to a position of sufficient importance to offer real prospects as an ally. The only ecclesiastical elector maintained was the Archbishop of Mainz, but even he was transferred to Regensburg, his lands having been on the left bank of the Rhine. The motivation for this preservation lay partly in the fact that the incumbent of the see, Karl Theodor von Dalberg, was one of the most influential personalities among the German princes, and it seemed good policy to separate him from those about to be secularized, of whom he would have been the natural leader. The other two ecclesiastical electorates were given to Baden and Württemberg, while a third was created for Hesse-Cassel. In this fashion the balance of power in the electoral college turned in favor of the

² Philip Cobenzl to Colloredo, June 1, 1802. S.A., FRANKREICH, 267, fol. 100-106.

Protestants, and the Hofburg could well feel apprehensive about the next imperial election.³

In regard to the indemnification of Prussia the First Consul was not completely successful in having his way. He not only stood opposed to her expansion in Franconia, but was extremely desirous of pushing her back beyond the Elbe. In this he was primarily motivated by the hope of a freer hand in South Germany, but it is also possible that he wished to eliminate all chance of rivalry with the state which appeared his most natural ally. In the end Prussian aggrandizement in Franconia was prevented, but Bonaparte was obliged to admit her extension in Westphalia and Thuringia.

The despair of the Viennese statesmen, as they became aware of the full extent of the catastrophe which had befallen them, challenges description. Cobenzl, on his part, found it convenient to blame everything on the domestic chaos into which the monarchy had undoubtedly fallen.

What a lesson we here receive [he complained bitterly to Colloredo] regarding the slight respect which we enjoy abroad, respect which alone constitutes the security of states. Bonaparte knows us only too well. He has seduced Prussia through the advantages which he secures for her, Russia through the favor shown Baden and Württemberg; he has made his peace with England; us he does not need and we have nothing to hope from him. And so it will remain as long as our domestic affairs are in such a state of disorder. All the world knows that we are not in a position to wage war. How then obtain the execution of treaties from a man like Bonaparte? ⁴

The Vice-Chancellor was also pleased to blame the military administration:

We have nothing to fear from the Turks or the Russians; almost our only enemy is France, Prussia coming only in second line. And the sides from which France can deal us the most rapid and hardest blows are precisely the ones where we have the fewest troops. . . .

³ A copy of the Franco-Russian project is in A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 717, fol. 145-150.

⁴ July 6, 1802. S.A., GROSSE KORRESPONDEZ, 458. Colloredo hardly needed to be convinced of the disordered state of affairs. Just a year previously we find him saying of the financial situation: "Si Dieu ne nous sauve par un

To exhaust our finances of paying 300,000 men and still have to fear a sudden attack is something so outrageous that one can scarcely grasp it.⁵

But Cobenzl, whatever his faults, was not the man to waste his time in vain lamentations, and he soon proposed a procedure which promised to save something out of the general wreck. He advocated that the Emperor should follow the constitutional way, call the Deputation together at Regensburg, and issue a warning against the premature occupation of territories. At the same time extensive military preparations were to be made, so that Salzburg, Passau, and numerous territories in Swabia could be occupied if Prussia and Bavaria insisted on ignoring this prohibition. Russia was also to be notified that the project outlined in her November "Tableaux" of the previous year was acceptable to Austria: it had at least assigned Swabian lands to Tuscany which now seemed destined for Bavaria.

In accordance with this program, to which the Emperor had given his sanction, an imperial rescript was presented to the Diet by the Austrian delegate, Baron von Hügel, warning the states of the Empire that aggressive action on the part of any one of them would force even the most moderate to similar steps. At the same time a threatening note was delivered to Bavaria, demanding peremptorily that she should refrain from occupying the territories assigned to her. The court of Munich was little inclined to submit to such dictation, and the inquiry was made at Paris whether the First Consul would grant his support if Bavaria insisted on her rights.⁶ A dispatch of Champagny's, which arrived at the Tuileries a few days later, also painted the disposition of the Hofburg in the most alarming colors, and expressed his conviction that only the bad state of her finances could prevent Austria from taking up arms.⁷

miracle, je ne sais vraiment comment nous en sortirons." And in regard to public feeling: "On murmure beaucoup dans le publique, on menace même." To Thugut, July 3, 1801. *Ibid.*, 447, fol. 127-134.

⁵ To Colloredo, Nov. 29, 1802. *Ibid.*, 459.

⁶ Cetto to Talleyrand, July 26, 1802. A.E., BAVÈRE, 179, no. 71.

⁷ Champagny to Talleyrand, 7 thermidor an X (July 26, 1802). A.E., AUTRICHE, 372, no. 285.

These communications were bound to exercise a disturbing influence at Paris. The First Consul was far from inclined to welcome a war with Austria over this question or at this time. The instructions with which Talleyrand had accompanied the original notification of the convention of June 3 to Champagny had shown that the French government was willing to sweeten the bitter pill Austria would have to swallow. If she went through the operation with a certain degree of *bonne grâce* and assisted the swift execution of the arrangement proposed, France might look with indulgence on the exchange of Bavaria's possessions on the right bank of the Inn for those of Austria on the left, would tolerate a union of the Maltese and Teutonic Orders, and would even accept an Austrian Archduke as co-adjutor of the last ecclesiastical elector. The French ambassador was not to urge these concessions upon Cobenzl, but only to mention them if a favorable reaction was to be expected.⁸ Now that Austria was showing a militant front, the First Consul was probably less inclined to compromise than before, for with him prestige was ever a primary consideration; throughout his career he was never able to bring himself to yield to a threat. He therefore ordered Talleyrand to notify Bavaria that he was by no means inclined to look upon the Austrian declaration with indifference, and that Laforest was being instructed to reply with a threat of French intervention if Austria announced an intention to occupy Bavarian territory or any of the districts which were assigned to the court of Munich as compensation for its losses on the left bank of the Rhine.⁹

Events now began to move rapidly. On August 3 Prussia, ignoring the imperial rescript, occupied Hildesheim and Münster. As Bavaria refused a proposition to stay out of Passau if the Austrians did the same, the Viennese cabinet decided on the occupation of that city. When Philip Cobenzl announced this intention, Talleyrand immediately told him that France

⁸ Talleyrand to Champagny, 26 prairial an X (June 15, 1802). A.E., AUTRICHE, 372, no. 249.

⁹ Talleyrand to Cetto, Aug. 6, 1802. A.E., BAYÈRE, 179, no. 73.

would regard it with "extreme displeasure."¹⁰ As soon as it was known to be an accomplished fact, Champagny was notified that the First Consul was extremely sensitive about this act, which he would never approve. The hope was expressed that the ambassador had protested vigorously against the whole procedure, but he was urgently requested to hold to the most polite and cautious language and to try in every way to conciliate.¹¹ A few days later this was followed by instructions in Talleyrand's own hand, a rare occurrence, testifying most eloquently to the importance with which the matter was regarded. Champagny was to do all he could to pour oil on the troubled waters, to speak of the First Consul's pacific sentiments, his esteem for Archduke Charles, his regard for Austrian interests. But to all questions in regard to the policy of France at Ratisbon he was to answer: "*Je rendrai compte à mon gouvernement; je n'ai point d'instructions à cet égard.*" It was an impossibility to treat on so delicate an affair in two places at once, declared the minister.¹² It is very clear that Bonaparte was determined at all costs to defeat Austria diplomatically, but he was at least equally anxious not to offend her unnecessarily. In the latter connection he had even found it convenient to represent Russia as the chief mover in those features of the plan which were most obnoxious to Austria, instructing his ambassador to reveal the fact that it had been Kalytcheff who had first suggested the idea of Franco-Russian mediation, and to say that he ". . . recognized the influence of M. de Markov in the plan by the advantages accorded to the Houses of Würtemberg and Baden."¹³

In the meantime Champagny had been making every possible

¹⁰ Talleyrand to Champagny, 26 thermidor an X (Aug. 14, 1802). A.E., AUTRICHE, 372, no. 304.

¹¹ Talleyrand to Champagny, 12 fructidor an X (Aug. 30, 1802). A.E., AUTRICHE, 372, no. 325. The elector of Bavaria had by now appealed to France to prevail upon Austria to evacuate Maximilian Joseph to the First Consul. A.E., BAVIÈRE, 179, no. 75.

¹² 19 fructidor an X (Sept. 6, 1802). A.E., AUTRICHE, 372, no. 331.

¹³ Talleyrand to Champagny, 19 thermidor an X (Aug. 7, 1802). A.E., AUTRICHE, 372, no. 299.

effort on his own account to persuade the Austrian cabinet to withdraw from Passau. After emphasizing how its action might have served to change the First Consul's disposition to accommodate the Emperor, he gradually came forward with the concessions which the French government had been ready to make, particularly the suggestions of the exchange with Bavaria and the coadjutorship. Cobenzl was undoubtedly struck by these overtures, so much so, that the French ambassador believed the occupation might have been forestalled if they had been made earlier. But the Hofburg felt itself committed to a determined policy, while Passau seemed too valuable a prize to renounce.¹⁴ Austria was also convinced that here lay her only opening for an attack on the plan of indemnities, which threatened to be the final blow to her influence. She feared to offend the princes who gained by the project if she moved against it directly, so she spoke little of the three Protestant electors or the aggrandizement of any particular state, while affecting great indignation at the comparatively small share of the ex-Grand Duke of Tuscany.

While the sparring over Passau went on, Bonaparte sent Colonel Lauriston on a mission into Germany. It had now become a habit of his to dispatch members of his personal staff on rapid errands at times of crisis. These swift thrusts were extremely disconcerting to his opponents, who were never quite certain of their purpose. Lauriston's first destination was Karlsruhe; he visited the Margrave at his retreat of La Favorite and succeeded in persuading him to occupy his share of the indemnities immediately. From the capital of Baden he proceeded to Munich, where he was received like a messenger of hope by the Elector and his principal minister, Montgelas. The colonel noticed that the Austrian minister, Count Buol von Schauenstein, whom he encountered at a dinner, was exceedingly anxious about the purpose of his mission. On the other hand, the Prus-

¹⁴ "On a été assez touché de cette ouverture, mais on ne renonce pas sans peine à la possession de Passau." From the first of two reports of Champagny's of the 3 fructidor an X (Aug. 21, 1802). A.E., AUTRICHE, 372, nos. 316, 317.

sian statesman Hardenberg, who at that time was on a special mission to the court of Munich, outdid himself in cordiality. It seemed that at each new stopover the French envoy was making a greater impression, the climax being reached at Regensburg, where he met the whole Deputation and the envoys of all the German states at an assembly given by Laforest. Finally Lauriston visited Passau, where he found hundreds of bivouac fires and enough sentries in different uniforms to give the general appearance of an army of 50,000 men, but very few soldiers. The general effect of his mission was certainly the universal impression that the French government was determined to take a decisive part in German affairs and that the opponents of Austria could depend on its support.¹⁵ It may also have convinced the First Consul that Austria's show of firmness lacked real force, and decided him to call her bluff.

Bonaparte was indeed rapidly losing his patience with his adversaries. The failure of Champagny's offers at Vienna and Austria's continued insistence on her advanced position hardly tended to soften a disposition so little inclined to compromise. "It is ever the spirit of Thugut which directs the cabinet of Vienna," he told Philip Cobenzl, and when the ambassador vigorously maintained the contrary, he insisted: "No, no, I know that better than you from the reports of my secret spies."¹⁶ Neither a letter of Emperor Francis nor a semiofficial note presented at the same time by the Austrian ambassador succeeded in changing his opinion.¹⁷

A forty-page dispatch by Philip Cobenzl, no doubt the longest he ever composed, graphically tells the story of his vehement

¹⁵ Lauriston to the First Consul, 22 and 23 fructidor (Sept. 9 and 10, 1802); Laforest to Talleyrand of the latter date. A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 718, fol. 62-64, 85-86, 87-90.

¹⁶ Philip Cobenzl's report of Sept. 6, 1802. S.-A., FRANKREICH, 267, IX, fol. 1-40.

¹⁷ Francis to the First Consul, Aug. 19, 1802; Extrait d'une dépêche de la Chancellerie de Court et d'État à l'ambassadeur de Sa Majesté Impériale et Royale à Paris du 21 août 1802. A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 26, fol. 134-135, 168. Owing to lack of confidence in Talleyrand's rendition of his communications, Cobenzl frequently made use of extracts from his instructions as informal notes

discussions with Talleyrand, Markov, and the First Consul.¹⁸ The envoy wrote as he had spoken — with feeling. Conscious of having been deceived by everyone and without a doubt aware that only his relationship to the Vice-Chancellor assured his continuance in his post, Cobenzl was temporarily a most difficult person to deal with. He had not been hesitant in giving public utterance to his bitterness and irritation, labeling the Franco-Russian project a model of ignorance and stupidity whose only object was the destruction of the German constitution; it was like distributing a sackful of nuts and apricots to a horde of children.¹⁹ To have Markov now suggest that perhaps, if one looked hard enough, there might be found for the Grand Duke some convent which had not yet been secularized, that is, to fumble in the bottom of the sack for possibly forgotten scraps, was like having insult added to injury. And the furious Austrian expressed himself to this effect in no uncertain terms. No less stormy were his interviews with Bonaparte and his foreign minister, whom he overwhelmed with reproaches. France, he alleged, had since the Peace of Luneville engaged in a veritable persecution of the House of Austria, allowing no opportunity to escape to annoy or injure it in every conceivable way. In the face of this flood of accusations Talleyrand did not for a moment lose his *sang-froid*, giving vent in turn to his own displeasure concerning the action at Passau. Cobenzl's justification of his government's procedure he thrust aside as a fine pretext, "such as one would supply to children." Certainly the Austrian did not exaggerate when he commented upon the conclusion of their conference: "After that we took leave of one another with an air of reciprocal dissatisfaction."

The principal conference between Cobenzl and the First

upon questions of importance. Regarding the above he reports: "Les explications verbales qu'on a avec le Ministre des relations extérieures n'étant presque jamais rendues exactement au premier Consul, je me mis d'abord à rédiger un extrait des dépêches que je venois de recevoir, pour le laisser dans les mains de Talleyrand, afin qu'il en fasse lecture à Bonaparte."

¹⁸ See note 16.

¹⁹ From a dispatch of Reitzenstein. Erdmannsdörffer and Obser, *Pol. Korr. Karl Friedrichs von Baden*, vol. IV, no. 212.

Consul lasted three hours and was no more lacking in mutual recriminations. The ambassador was impressed, however, that while the discussion at times was lively enough, Bonaparte not once allowed himself to be carried away in the manner of which so many diplomatists had had cause to complain. He was nearly always calm, adopting at times an air of sincerity and good nature. But even in the midst of the most conciliatory language his eyes and expression bore testimony to his determination not to give way on any vital point. One final concession he was ready to offer in the form of the principality of Eichstadt as an addition to the lot of Archduke Ferdinand. "The manner in which this proposition was received," wrote Talleyrand to Champagny, "constitutes the proof that absolutely nothing reasonable is to be done with Austria, and it has been necessary to have recourse to other channels for the definitive arrangement of the affairs of Germany."²⁰ In effect Bonaparte had decided on a demonstration of force. It would seem that he surprised Lucchesini, who was in no sense authorized to do anything of the kind, into signing the noted convention of September 5, by which France and Prussia agreed that if Passau had not been evacuated within sixty days they would ". . . combine their entire forces with those of Bavaria in order to repel this unjust aggression."²¹ For a moment Frederick William III indeed hesitated about rejecting the club which was thus thrust into his hands. Lucchesini received so sharp a reprimand that he apprised Talleyrand of his fear that he would be disavowed and that Prussia would probably not ratify unless assured of Russian support,²² but in the end the King yielded to the *fait accompli* and sent his adhesion.

²⁰ 20 fructidor an X (Sept. 7, 1802). A.E., AUTRICHE, 372, no. 333.

²¹ *Ibid.*, supplement 26, fol. 171; De Clerq, *Recueil des traités*, I, 605-606. The First Consul had hoped to avoid this step by rushing Cobenzl into a hurried agreement on the whole indemnities question. It was only when the exasperated Austrian proved intractable that he had recourse to the expedient of a coercive pact with Prussia. The considerations upon which his policy was based are clearly stated in a letter to Talleyrand, Aug. 31, 1802, *Corr.*, VIII, no. 6297.

²² Lucchesini to Talleyrand, 3 jour complémentaire an X (Sept. 20, 1802). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 179, no. 87.

Regensburg was meanwhile becoming the center of diplomatic activity, as Bonaparte had from the first intended it to be. By the middle of September the question of indemnities finally came to discussion, and the representative of the Emperor, Baron von Hügel, was introduced to express the views of his master. He commenced by the declaration that the Emperor would have been happy to take a greater part in the settlement, but that all his overtures at Paris had been in vain and that he had not succeeded in gaining admission to the Franco-Russian negotiations. Yet, he pointed out, the plan arrived at in the French capital had been characterized by Talleyrand himself as a mere series of propositions which could be altered in any detail. He therefore proposed that each article of the Franco-Russian project be discussed separately by the Diet, that is, its rejection *en bloc*.²³ This bold move demanded an energetic answer if everything were not to be ruined. The Russian envoy, Baron von Bühler, presented a brief note of protest, but Laforest came forward with a regular bombshell. To Hügel's charge that France would not reply to Austrian overtures and had thus retarded the German settlement, he countered that these overtures had been made only in the interest of Archduke Ferdinand. It was a favorite project of the court of Vienna to extend its territory to the Lech and thus "rayer la Bavière du nombre des puissances." France could never afford to see the equilibrium of Germany overturned by the destruction of Bavaria, which, inclusive of her indemnities, she considered to be under the protection of the mediating powers. The First Consul personally declared that he would not suffer Passau to remain in the hands of Austria, nor that she should obtain all or part of the right bank of the Inn.²⁴

One can imagine the effect of such language upon a Deputation already inclined toward the French point of view. Five of its members (Bavaria, Brandenburg, Hesse-Cassel, Württem-

²³ Report of Laforest, 7 fructidor an X (Aug. 25, 1802). A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 717, fol. 39-40.

²⁴ Laforest's note, 27 fructidor an X (Sept. 14, 1802). A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 372, no. 247.

berg, and Archchancellor Dalberg) had made their bargains with France and stood to lose in almost any kind of rearrangement. The plan was adopted in principle, only Bohemia and the Teutonic Order dissenting, and a conclusum was drawn up accordingly. In Vienna there was only despair. Cobenzl appeared particularly offended by the insinuations contained in the note presented by Laforest; to Champagny he said that he could take an oath that Austria had never dreamed of an extension to the Lech, that the Isar was the greatest limit desired, and that for this, Bavaria would have been amply compensated in Swabia. "Jamais le Vice-Chancellor ne m'a paru aussi ému," reported the French envoy.²⁵

The deliberations of the Deputation now turned on the changes which were to be made in the details of the original project. Regensburg was rapidly taking on the aspect of the "singerie" to which Napoleon chose to compare it a few years later. Everybody shouted at the top of his voice for fear of not being heard in the din. "To appear content with one's lot," said one deputy to Laforest, "would result in being cheated. There is no other way of defending oneself but to be demanding continuously."²⁶ Austria asked for an electoral hat for Archduke Charles as Grand Master of the Teutonic Order; Württemberg, for an increase of six virile votes in the College of Princes; the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, for additional revenue to support the dignity of his new electorate; and Prussia, for the addition of Nuremberg to her indemnity.

The earlier efforts of the court of Vienna to prevail upon Russia to retrace her steps had been completely unsuccessful. While Alexander and his ministers had never been very enthusiastic about the project of June 3 and had accepted it only because a rejection would have upset everything, the memory of Austria's "duplicity" of the previous year had continued to

²⁵ To Talleyrand, 1 jour complémentaire an X (Sept. 18, 1802). A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 372, no. 357.

²⁶ Laforest to Talleyrand, 8 brumaire an XI (Oct. 30, 1802). A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 719, fol. 229-232.

rankle. So the Tsar and his ministers turned a deaf ear to the Austrian entreaties, refused to consider again the November "Tableaux" as the basis for a German settlement, and even informed the court of Vienna that if it came to a war with France on the question, Russia would fight on the side of the latter. To Ambassador Saurau, Kotchubey said sarcastically: "You may find the project chimeric; we find it wise. The Tsar will undoubtedly be very sorry that he was unable to guess Austria's wishes."

By the end of summer, however, the general situation was becoming more favorable to Austria. The increasing disagreement between England and France inclined the former to show more complacency toward the opponents of the Republic on any question. Prussia, now practically assured of her lot, had become less ready to coöperate with the First Consul in everything; it had only been by a sort of trickery that she was brought into the Convention of September 5. The Tsar, at last waking up to the fact that everything had been done through him instead of by him, hid his jealousy behind a screen of self-righteous indignation over the erection of a "tyranny" in the guise of the Consulate for life. In September Alexander Woronzov became Chancellor, a mediocre figure, dominated largely by his Francophobe brother in the London embassy. Talleyrand's agent, Baudus, in his wanderings about Germany, lit upon the discovery that the dowager Empress was not at all gratified by the share of indemnities which her relatives had received and was using her influence against France.²⁷

There was a fleeting moment when some of the advisers of Emperor Francis urged that he withhold his approval of the Recess. But the danger of this course seemed more than equal to its possibilities, for then a settlement would surely be made without Austria; time would ratify what the Emperor had refused to sanction; and the last vestige of the imperial system would have passed away. Certainly the safest as well as the

²⁷ Report of 17 vendémiaire an XI (Oct. 9, 1802). A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 705, no. 132.

most immediately profitable way for Austria was to submit to the inevitable and make the best bargain for herself with the First Consul.

Bonaparte had from the first been more than willing to make concessions as long as his prestige was not affected thereby. So, when Philip Cobenzl presented two notes in which the territorial claims of Archduke Ferdinand were rehearsed and the demand made that Salzburg and the Grand Mastership of the Teutonic Order be erected into electorates,²⁸ Bonaparte was ready to meet him halfway. Talleyrand drew up a lengthy reply which was revised by the First Consul in person. In this Salzburg and Berchtesgaden were represented as at least equal in value to Tuscany and the other claims of Austria characterized as entirely inadmissible. Yet, as the Emperor had personally appealed to the head of the Republic for an increase of his brother's indemnity, and as the Tsar of Russia had made known his willingness to confirm any changes in the plan not involving basic principles, the First Consul was ready to use his influence with Bavaria to prevail upon her to abandon Eichstadt. As the ex-Duke of Modena had refused the Breisgau, this territory, in addition to Ortenau, might also be given to Archduke Ferdinand, while Austria could herself take Trent and Brixen. As far as the new electorates were concerned, France was ready to communicate with Russia in regard to adding one for Salzburg, but the head of an order of knights was hardly suitable for this position, while the existence of three electors in one family would destroy the "liberté germanique."²⁹

These suggestions seem to have appeared so favorable to Philip Cobenzl, that he felt himself justified in accepting them

²⁸ Note verbale of Sept. 20 and note of Oct. 12. A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 26, fol. 173, 176. The Austrian demands were characterized by Talleyrand: "Ce sont toujours les mêmes plans, la même exagération, les mêmes soins à rebaisser la valeur de ce qu'on demande et rehausser celle de ce qu'on propose d'abandonner. La pensée chérie de l'Autriche est toujours d'arriver à l'Inn." To the First Consul, Sept. 25, 1802. *Ibid.*, fol. 175.

²⁹ The original draft with Bonaparte's corrections and dated 23 vendémiaire an XI (Oct. 15, 1802) is in *ibid.*, supplément 26, fol. 177.

tentatively. He therefore agreed to the basis laid down in the above note, though proposing a few slight alterations.³⁰ At Vienna the news of Bonaparte's offers was received with at least moderate satisfaction, and the ambassador at Paris was given authority to treat.

Joseph Bonaparte was selected for the task of negotiating the convention which was to embody the changes in the plan of German reconstruction. As usual it was the determination of the First Consul to draw a personal profit out of an arrangement in which France made no sacrifice of her own. As an "honest broker" no other statesman was ever able to approach the commissions he could exact. Joseph's instructions obliged him to carry on two separate negotiations: the first with Cobenzl and Markov on the proposed revision of the German settlement; the second with Cobenzl alone, and of this Markov was not to have the slightest knowledge.³¹ There was in question, namely, Austria's recognition of all the changes in Italy since the conclusion of the Treaty of Luneville. It was only with the greatest reluctance that the cabinet of Vienna agreed to this new sacrifice. To none of the stipulations of the peace had the Austrians found it so difficult to reconcile themselves as to those which excluded the scions of the House of Hapsburg from Italy. A score of times had the two Cobenzls returned to the charge in the vain hope that at least one of the two Archdukes, Tuscany or Modena, would be replaced in the peninsula. Their pleadings, cajolery, insinuations had met with the single inflexible response: "L'Adige pour la Maison d'Autriche et pas un pouce au delà." The continued insistence of the Austrians in the face of this categorical refusal demonstrated only too clearly their refusal to recognize the permanence of the Italian settlement. A formal acceptance of what had taken place since the peace would therefore perhaps not contribute considerably to the stability of the existing order, but it at least

³⁰ Cobenzl to Talleyrand, Oct. 19, 1802. A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 26, fol. 177.

³¹ Talleyrand to Joseph, 18 frimaire an XI (Dec. 17, 1802). A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 26, fol. 181.

restrained the Viennese government from agitating diplomatically against the changes arrived at.³²

The German revolution was the principal consequence of the diplomatic victories which Bonaparte won in the years 1801 and 1802. Throughout this period he had been able to keep Austria, his chief rival on the Continent, completely isolated and had defeated her decisively in every political skirmish. He had been equally successful in attaching Prussia to himself and in gaining at least the passive coöperation of Russia. While the greed of the First Consul's subordinates had undoubtedly influenced his policy in more than one instance,³³ the general settlement reflected the traditional French aims, as well as a profound conception of the rôle of Germany in his future political system. To his predecessors intervention in Germany had represented a means of achieving the Rhine frontier and restraining the power of the two great German states. "The guarantee of the Treaties of Westphalia," Vergennes once wrote, "has always been regarded as one of the brightest ornaments in the crown of France and as one of the most efficacious mediums which she can employ to restrain the ambition and restlessness of the great powers of Germany."³⁴ While Bonaparte's interference in Germany was similarly motivated by the desire to check Prussia and Austria, it at the same time had the more aggressive purpose of organizing Germany so as to make it an effective instrument in the rivalry of France with the other

³² The two conventions (public and secret) of Dec. 26, 1802, in Neumann, *Recueil des traités conclus par l'Autriche*, II, 25-27, 28-29; De Clercq, *Recueil des traités*, I, 608-611, 611-612.

³³ The Baden diplomats were among the most skillful in the art of bribery, having assured themselves of the support of both Talleyrand and Mathieu. In one report of Reitzenstein's we find proof of the effectiveness of his use of money: "Talleyrand a encore représenté au 1er Consul avec tant de force la nécessité de faire davantage en faveur du Mgr. le Margrave qu'il était parvenu à arracher quasi de lui, que nous devons avoir une augmentation de 50,000 âmes de population." May 20, 1802. Erdmannsdörffer and Obser, *Pol. Korr. Karl Friedrichs von Baden*, IV, no. 140.

³⁴ Instructions given Breteuil, when he went to Vienna as ambassador, Dec. 28, 1774. Sorel, *Recueil des instructions données aux ambassadeurs et ministres de France depuis les Traités de Westphalie jusqu'à la Révolution française: Autriche* (1884), I, 480.

continental powers. The South German princes had been brought to look to him for protection, leadership, and plunder. At the same time the increase in the size and compactness of their possessions made them, for almost the first time in history, effective allies. "The might of Germany is great, yet it is of such a nature that no one can make use of it," Machiavelli had once said. But the phenomenon had come to pass: into the place of the old pliable ecclesiastical principalities had stepped the energetic, forward-looking secondary states, the weight of which could at last be combined into an effective force. For the time being the Recess thus assured the hegemony of France in Central Europe, but from the viewpoint of general history it can be characterized as a major contribution to the political evolution of modern Germany.

In Germany itself the Recess was greeted with a curious lack of sentiment, either favorable or otherwise. It was in effect a princes' revolution, and as the work of the dynasties it could hardly be expected to excite much popular enthusiasm. By and large it strengthened particularism, and in some of the states, notably Bavaria, even a kind of national feeling came to the surface. At the same time, those cosmopolites who saw in France the country which alone was able and willing to overstep national bonds felt that their end had been served. To others of the German liberals the trend toward monarchy in France was a bitter disappointment, and Bonaparte already came to be looked upon as a tyrant. So strong was the drift of public opinion against France, that Baudus proposed to Talleyrand the creation of a "bureau de l'esprit public," the distribution of "petits cadeaux" to influential journalists, and the subsidizing of a newspaper by the French government.⁸⁵ While such a policy was never carried out systematically, the attention paid by the First Consul to German public opinion in the following years was to influence his conduct on more than one occasion.

⁸⁵ Reports on the German press, 4, 17, and 25 ventôse an XI (Feb. 23, Mar. 8 and 16. 1801). A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 705, nos. 155, 158, 162.

PART II

THE RESUMPTION OF THE DUEL WITH
ENGLAND

CHAPTER VI

CONQUESTS IN PEACE

THE period from the signing of the preliminary treaty with England to the rupture of the Peace of Amiens is representative of the most restless expansive activity France had ever known. In Europe a girdle of secondary states was linked to France by military and civil bonds, while furious energy was displayed in the effort to fashion a new colonial empire across the seas. In every direction the First Consul was taking up the threads torn asunder by the Revolution. The heir of both the old and the new France, he proclaimed himself the executor of her historic claims throughout the world. And at all times there is present that all-pervading personal element, based not only on robust self-assertion and calculating ambition, but also on the necessity of maintaining himself in a position to which only his unique talents and achievements could give him a claim.

In Europe the objectives of traditional French policy had been gained, but the Revolution itself had set up new principles and aims. Proclaiming the liberation of mankind, it had burst the boundaries of France, declaring freedom a duty which the peoples had no right to reject. But in imposing liberty the Frenchman had also imposed his rule, and the domination which years of occupation and administration had made a habit was not easily renounced. The "great nation" had ever felt itself destined to supremacy in Europe, and the rôle it had played in the previous decade hardly tended to decrease either its self-esteem or its ambition. A profound conception of the mission of France was expressed in a study brought out in 1801 by Hauterive, after Talleyrand the foremost statesman of the old school whom the Republic possessed. His *De l'État de la France à la fin de l'an VIII*, the first truly political work pub-

lished in France since the commencement of the Revolution, was a reply to an essay by Friedrich Gentz which had exalted England at the expense of her rival. Hauterive sought to show that the political system of Europe at the outbreak of the Revolution had been so rotten that it was not worth preserving. France alone was fitted by the principles of her government and the greatness of her position and power to replace the old system by a new federative organization; of this she would also be the natural head, for no other state could undertake the guarantee of order and welfare. It would be to the interest of the nations to trust to her leadership. In effect the writer thus proclaimed the hegemony of France in Europe and implied her right to establish it by force — it was with similar arguments that Napoleon at St. Helena strove to justify his conquests.

Since the reign of Henry II France had been orientated to the east instead of to the south. The Revolution, however, not only had gained the natural frontiers in both directions, but had entered into a duel with the Hapsburgs for supremacy in the Italian peninsula. The principal representative of this policy had been Bonaparte himself, who had seen in it a means of exalting his own military and political achievements over those of the generals who had fought in Germany. Moreover, Italy had always been a prize for which other nations had contested; it would, indeed, have been a radical departure from all European traditions to permit the Italians to work out their own destiny. In his Italian policy, however, the First Consul never enjoyed the wholehearted agreement or coöperation of Talleyrand, who saw in it the direct negation of his cherished "*politique d'équilibre*." A hard and determined realist, without much imagination or breadth of conception, he insisted on judging every policy from the standpoint of permanence. His views are partially expressed in his last memorandum to the old royal government on the occasion of his mission to London in 1792. After severely condemning what tendencies toward adventure there were in the policy of the ancient régime, he continued: "France must remain circumscribed in her proper

limits; she owes it to her glory, to justice, to reason, to her interests, and to those of the peoples who will be liberated by her."¹ Of even greater significance is the judgment he passes in his memoirs upon the policy of the First Consul before and after Amiens:

Up to the peace of Amiens Bonaparte may well have committed faults, for what man is exempt from them? But he had not yet manifested designs to the execution of which a Frenchman who loved his country would have found it difficult to contribute. One might not always be in agreement with him in regard to means, but the utility of the end could not be questioned at a time when it evidently was nothing else than to bring to a conclusion the war abroad on the one hand, and the Revolution by the reëstablishment of royalty on the other. . . . Hardly was the Peace of Amiens concluded, when moderation commenced to abandon Bonaparte; this peace had not yet received its complete execution before he was sowing the seeds of new wars, which, after overwhelming France and Europe, were to conduct him to his own ruin.²

Like many another statesman, Talleyrand saw the past too much in retrospect, particularly when he was anxious to portray his own conduct in the proper light. But the basic truth of an increasing opposition between his views and those of his master can nevertheless be affirmed. It was in the Republic's Italian policy that this contrast became first evident. Even at Luneville Talleyrand had opposed the exclusion of Austria from Italy, and for a long time he tried to influence the First Consul to leave the Grand Duke of Tuscany in Italy. But the First Consul stuck to his guns throughout the negotiations on the indemnities question, in spite of the fact that Russia also favored the restoration of the Grand Duke.³

After Marengo the French had immediately commenced to re-establish the provisional governments in Italy. Each of these consisted of an "Extraordinary Commission" of seven to

¹ Lady Charlotte Blennerhassett, *Talleyrand, eine Studie* (1884), p. 150.

² Talleyrand, *Mémoires*, I, 289-290.

³ During Duroc's mission to St. Petersburg Panin represented this as one of the principal aims of Russian policy. Duroc to Talleyrand, 13 messidor an IX (June 30, 1801). A.E., RUSSIE, 140, no. 198.

nine members and a "Consulta" of from twenty to fifty. The real head in every case, however, was a French envoy extraordinary, who called and presided over the Consulta, exercised an often decisive control over the acts of the Commission, and communicated the wishes, that is, the commands, of the French government whenever the situation required it. As a kind of unofficial governor-general, the commander-in-chief of the French troops in Italy ruled at Milan, having the authority to give orders to the envoys of the Republic in military matters.

Bonaparte's policy in Italy down to the autumn of 1802 was centered around two main objectives. The first of these was the utmost exploitation of the financial resources of the wealthy North Italian states, enormous sums being obtained both in the form of direct contributions and as requisitions for the upkeep of the resident French troops. This policy of supporting the armies of the Republic and balancing the national budget by resorting to the exploitation of the bordering states was by no means a Napoleonic innovation; throughout the Revolution and the Empire it had been and was to be the principal urge to conquest and annexation, and nowhere did it find fuller application than in Italy. At the same time it was the task of French diplomacy to delay the formulation of permanent constitutions as long as possible, while arriving at such conditions of peace with the powers which had composed the Second Coalition as to leave the Republic entirely unrestricted in exercising the dominating influence when the time for action came. Accordingly, the French envoys throughout North Italy were instructed to do their utmost to prevent any positive action looking toward achievement of more definite forms.⁴

The problem of arriving at a general peace without renouncing his free hand in Italy was one which Bonaparte could well expect to find difficult, since all three of the powers of the old coalition were intent on preventing French domination in the peninsula. For a long time Russia and Austria clung to the hope that France would be forced by England to loosen her

⁴The First Consul to Talleyrand, Sept. 3, 1800. *Corr.*, VI, no. 5080.

grip upon Italy. How little the Hofburg was ready to accept its exclusion from Italian affairs is shown by the persistence with which it returned to the charge on the question of Piedmont. Immediately after Champagny's arrival at Vienna, Talleyrand, expecting a renewal of these tentatives, instructed him to reply to any such that, ". . . the British government having passed in silence over everything which concerned the King of Sardinia, and the Emperor of Russia limiting himself to expressing his personal interest without demanding anything positive in regard to Piedmont, it would now be necessary to regard the fate of this country as irrevocably fixed." Expecting that Austria would come forward with a demand for compensation, the First Consul was unwilling to admit any such claim, but Champagny was to insinuate that France was not opposed to Austrian aggrandizement, though such was not to be thought of in Italy and Germany. "As with the natural movement of time it was inevitable that the little states would be lost in the larger ones," a convenient addition to Austrian territory would be the Republic of the Seven Isles, an acquisition to which France would offer no opposition whatsoever.⁵

The news of the terms arrived at in the Treaty of London was like a blow to the hopes of the Viennese cabinet. "In general the dispositions of the treaty have appeared so advantageous to France that here one can hardly believe them," wrote the French ambassador. When he communicated to Cobenzl the principal arrangements of the preliminaries, the immediate reaction of the Vice-Chancellor was: "And Piedmont? Without doubt it has not yet been considered," he then continued. "Its fate will be determined at the Congress of Amiens."⁶ Champagny, who had not yet received Talleyrand's instructions, said nothing at the time, but, newly orientated, he took advantage of the inquiries of Cobenzl a few days later to state definitely that Piedmont would certainly be united to France. The Aus-

⁵ 19 vendémiaire an X (Oct. 11, 1801). A.E., AUTRICHE, 302, no. 27.

⁶ Champagny's report of 2 brumaire an X (Oct. 24, 1801). A.E., AUTRICHE, 372, no. 50.

trian appeared so disconcerted that the envoy seized the occasion to speak of the possibility of the acquisition of the Ionian Islands. Cobenzl did not rise to this bait, the acceptance of which would have embroiled Austria with England, Russia, and the Porte. Instead, he made a pointed reference to the late French guarantee of the integrity of the territory in question, which Champagny loftily swept aside by dwelling upon "the insecurity of little states."⁷

At Paris the popular belief in the existence of secret articles in the Treaty of London was shared by the diplomatic corps. During Cornwallis' stay at the French capital before his departure for Amiens he was approached on this subject by Philip Cobenzl. The Englishman mournfully protested the interest taken by his country in the maintenance of the European equilibrium, yet he felt obliged to admit that Britain was not in a position to do much for its re-establishment. "But," objected the desperate Austrian envoy, "if the French stay in Piedmont and maintain an army in the Cisalpine, they will dominate the kingdom of Naples and all of Italy." "I know it very well," returned Cornwallis, "but what is there to be done about it? We are totally unable to do anything on the continent."⁸

In the middle of October, 1801, when peace had been signed with Russia and a preliminary agreement arrived at with Britain, the First Consul deemed the time to have come for a definite organization of the principal Italian state, the Cisalpine Republic. He was undoubtedly aware of the continuation of Austrian intrigues in Lombardy, where the agents of the Viennese government were doing their utmost to restore its influence and to undermine that of the French.⁹ The hold of the Repub-

⁷ Champagny to Talleyrand, 6 brumaire an X (Oct. 28, 1801), A.E., AUTRICHE, 372, no. 53.

⁸ Cobenzl's report of Nov. 21, 1801. S.-A., FRANKREICH, 267.

⁹ A few months later Cobenzl wrote in a letter to Colloredo: "Nous devons tâcher d'ôter toute méfiance aux Français, d'inspirer de plus de confiance à la République italienne et quand nous y serons parvenu, en faire usage pour favoriser sous main leur inclination à se rendre de jour en jour moins dépendants de France pour autant que nous le pourrons sans donner d'ombrage à Bonaparte." May 31, 1802. S.-A., GROSSE KORRESPONDENZ, 458.

lic upon northern Italy was every day becoming more precarious, for now that her protection was no longer needed, even her warmest supporters were beginning to find her rule irksome. In 1799 the change of masters had been welcomed with but slight enthusiasm; three years later all parties were equally anxious to shake off French control. A strong royalist element in Piedmont demanded the return of her hereditary ruler, a pro-Austrian group remained active in Lombardy, nationalists everywhere desired complete independence from all foreign domination, reactionaries refused to be reconciled with a France which still clung to many revolutionary forms, while the very Jacobins found the Consulate too undemocratic for their tastes. Even Bonaparte's best lieutenants like Melzi and Marescalschi felt little enthusiasm for the French connection, the former writing to his nephew in the spring of 1801 that the Cisalpine Republic was a political monstrosity which was held together by French bayonets. While they remained, the peace of Europe would be in danger — the best way out would be the erection of a North Italian monarchy between the Alps and the Adige, probably with a Spanish prince. Such a state would be a real mediator between France and Austria.¹⁰ But this was exactly what Bonaparte and all French statesmen before and after him least desired. The Directory itself had regarded the Italian nationalists as its chief foes; on one occasion Talleyrand had written to Sieyès that the Republic could have no interest in creating a unified Italy, for such would only desire to shake off the French protectorate and play a rôle between France and Austria. Words truly prophetic! Bonaparte, on the other hand, was determined to favor a national policy as far as it would tend to reconcile the Italians with a temporary French protectorate, while in Piedmont, Genoa, and the other districts annexed up to 1805, everything was done to "françiser la population."¹¹

¹⁰ F. Melzi d'Eril, *Memorii—Documenti* (1865), I, 241-242. At a later date Melzi expressed himself in similar terms to the Austrian agent Moll. L. Cobenzl to Colloredo, May 31, 1802. S.-A., GROSSE KORRESPONDENZ, 458.

¹¹ Benno Menzel, *Napoleons Politik in Oberitalien, 1800-1805* (1913), p. 53.

In the expectation that the definitive peace with Britain would be arrived at within a few weeks, the First Consul decided in the first days of October to call a "Consulta" of notables to Lyons to deliberate upon the question of a permanent organization for the Cisalpine Republic. The choice of this city was motivated by the advisability of placing the congress beyond the reach of the intrigues of the diplomatic corps of the French capital, a very necessary precaution.¹² Bonaparte's hope of an early peace with England was, however, doomed to disappointment, for when the members of the Consulta arrived at Lyons in the middle of December, the treaty had by no means reached its final stage. Talleyrand had to be sent off on December 18, while pressure was placed upon Joseph at Amiens to hurry the completion of the treaty. "The First Consul," wrote Hauterive on the twenty-sixth, "will remain at Paris almost all of the next decade, in order to be in a position to give you any further instructions which the progress of the negotiations may require. He recommends that you make every effort to accelerate the issue."¹³ A few days later this was followed by a letter from Bonaparte personally: "I hope to know before my departure the exact date when the definitive treaty will be signed."¹⁴ But the negotiations were fated to continue for three months longer; the First Consul finally gave up hope and set out for Lyons with an escort which already resembled the progress of a court.

It was not until December 28 that Talleyrand and Chaptal had arrived at Lyons, where they made the unpleasant discovery that the two weeks of boresome waiting had inclined the deputies to be less pliable than expected. In a letter to the First Consul the minister of the exterior complained that they had had too much time to waste and ". . . are worth less at present than at the time of their arrival."¹⁵ To keep them occupied, the mass of deputies were divided up into committees

¹² Bonaparte to Talleyrand, Oct. 18, 1801. *Corr.*, VII, no. 5807.

¹³ Du Casse, *Histoire des négociations diplomatiques*, III, 76.

¹⁴ Dec. 30, 1801. *Corr.*, VII, no. 5906.

¹⁵ Jan. 3, 1802. P. Bertrand, *Lettres inédites de Talleyrand à Napoléon, 1800-1809* (1889), no. 17.

to deliberate on the details of the constitution, while Talleyrand set himself the task of winning over the outstanding personalities, particularly Melzi, whose attitude was by no means reassuring. When Talleyrand suggested Joseph as a likely candidate for president, he replied that the elder Bonaparte would hardly be suitable, for the chief magistrate ought to be able to show strength and accomplishments of his own; Joseph was only what his brother had made him. As for the First Consul himself, Melzi objected that the president of the Cisalpine ought to be able to devote his entire attention to her affairs.¹⁶ The other persons consulted by Talleyrand appear to have been more amenable, for he was soon able to notify his master that "everything could be done in twenty-four hours."

On January 23, 1802, the preparation of the constitution had reached its final stage. The Consulta assembled to make its choice of president, and Melzi emerged victorious on the first ballot. Talleyrand congratulated the deputies on their selection, but pointed out to them that they could make an even better one. The Italians took the hint; the chief magistracy of their republic was offered to Bonaparte, who accepted it in a superb speech which appealed strongly to their national sentiments.¹⁷ To console them for their lost independence Melzi was declared vice-president and the name of the republic changed from Cisalpine to Italian, a substitution which seemed to proclaim an entire future program.

The news of Bonaparte's election to the presidency of the Italian Republic came as both a surprise and a shock to most of the European courts. At Amiens Joseph recorded an immediate stiffening of the British demands. At Berlin Bignon noted that even the best friends of France saw this development with much trepidation: "They do not see without fear a circumstance which adds such a great weight to the power of France, of which they dread the excessive extension."¹⁸ All

¹⁶ Melzi, *Memorii - Documenti*, I, 270.

¹⁷ Jan. 26, 1802. *Corr.*, VII, no. 5934.

¹⁸ A.E., PRUSSE, 230, fol. 247.

the courts which had ministers at Vienna made it a point to inquire what impression that event had created there.¹⁹ The Hofburg did not seek to hide that it had been most disagreeably affected, but it was now a cardinal point of its policy not to make any demonstration which it lacked the force to sustain. In its servility it went the length of replying to the official notification, which Champagny had delivered on the orders of Talleyrand: "There can be no doubt but that the principal citizens of this republic, assembled at Lyons, could not do better than place their confidence in the hero who unites to such a high degree the talents of the most illustrious warrior to those of the most enlightened administrator."²⁰ The First Consul could well declare himself satisfied with ". . . the manner in which the results of the Consulta of Lyons have been received at Vienna and in which M. de Cobenzl [Philip] expresses himself in this connection in his diplomatic relations here."²¹ The secret of the Hofburg's complacency lay of course in the frantic efforts which it was making at this time to gain the Republic's favor in the approaching settlement of the German indemnities question. The official attitude of the court of Berlin was motivated by similar sentiments, so that Bonaparte could write to his brother that both Austrian and Prussian recognition of the latest change in Italy was assured.²² The British refused to recognize the new Italian states, although they did not feel strong enough to register a protest. Even the threat that the non-recognition of three states of such importance (Etruria and the Ligurian and Italian Republics) would have the two-fold effect of excluding English commerce and all future voice in their fate²³ did not induce the Addington ministry to re-

¹⁹ Champagny to Talleyrand, 1 ventôse an X (Feb. 20, 1802). A.E., AUTRICHE, 372, no. 148.

²⁰ Cobenzl's note to Champagny, March 30, 1803. *Ibid.*, 372, no. 158.

²¹ Talleyrand to Champagny, 4 germinal an X (March 25, 1802). *Ibid.*, 372, no. 174.

²² March 12, 1802. *Corr.*, VII, no. 599r.

²³ Bonaparte to Talleyrand, February 19, 1802. *Ibid.*, VII, no. 596g.

lent, and in the Treaty of Amiens, as in that of London, they are not mentioned by a single word.

In every other direction the hold of the French upon Italy was being similarly tightened throughout the spring and summer of 1802. The Ligurian Republic was given a new constitution by which Bonaparte was able to nominate the Doge and the other chief magistrates. Although the King of Etruria was nominally independent, French troops under Murat and Clarke controlled the country. The First Consul had calmly said to Louis Cobenzl that he would never withdraw them, for to do so would mean the surrender of Livorno to the English. The Austrian had the courage to retort: "That is to say, you mean to keep Rome and Naples in subjection."²⁴

The route over the Alps into Italy had always attracted the special interest of the First Consul. The cession of the district east of the Sesia to the Cisalpine Republic, at a time when the return of Piedmont to its legitimate sovereign seemed probable, had been motivated by the desire to control the Italian approach to the Simplon. Since 1800 both France and her North Italian vassal had been working energetically on a road over this great pass. French troops occupied the little Swiss district of Valais, whose possession seemed necessary for the control of the northern passage over both the Simplon and the St. Bernard. On August 26, 1802, the Republic of Valais was proclaimed,²⁵ and two days later France, the Italian Republic, and Helvetia entered into a treaty of guarantee by which the completion of the Simplon road was to be undertaken by the former two, the foreign representation and the military protection of the new state by France, and the policing of the road by Valais itself. France was to have the right to build barracks, magazines, and fortifications, ". . . so that the French army should not become

²⁴ Cobenzl to Francis II, May 19, 1801. S.-A., FRANKREICH, 262, V, fol. 48-63.

²⁵ Constitution given by Johannes Strickler, ed., *Ämtliche Sammlung der Akten aus der Zeit der Helvetischen Republik*, VIII, 433 ff.

a burden to the Republic of Valais.”²⁶ This hold upon the Alpine passes was considered by Bonaparte to be important enough to “change the system of warfare in Italy.”²⁷

By the end of the summer of 1802 the First Consul also deemed the time ripe for the final union of Piedmont with the Republic. The powers had by no means given up hope that he would yet change his mind. The Austrians were particularly unable to reconcile themselves to the inevitable, and throughout the negotiations at Amiens Cobenzl insisted on pumping Champagny as to whether the question was again being considered.²⁸ Cornwallis did, in effect, come forward from time to time with demands for the restoration or at least indemnification of the House of Savoy, but this was usually no more than a screen to ward off some disagreeable French tentative. So little were the British inclined to protect the interests of the Sardinian monarch at the expense of their own, that they refused to support his suggestion of sending a representative to Amiens under the pretext that by renouncing the alliance of 1797 he had lost all claim upon them.²⁹ Russia was more sympathetic. On June 15 Markov transmitted the new King of Sardinia's notification of his accession to the throne, accompanying it with a note in which the interest of the Tsar in his re-establishment was expressed. Russia would be gratified if Saint-Marsan were again invited to Paris to resume negotiations.³⁰ But Bonaparte's mind was made up. On September 2, 1802, Piedmont was at last formally annexed to France.

The First Consul went to the Senate and spoke an hour and a half on the necessity of the step, dwelling at great length on the advantages for Piedmont, Italy, and even the sovereigns of Europe. This for seeing one of their numbers crushed between two republics! Of the interests of France in the matter nothing

²⁶ De Clercq, *Recueil des traités*, I, 603.

²⁷ To Berthier. *Corr.*, VII, no. 6225.

²⁸ Champagny to Talleyrand, 18 brumaire an X (Nov. 10, 1801). A.E., AUTRICHE, 372, no. 68.

²⁹ N. Bianchi, *Storia della monarchia piemontese*, III, 419.

³⁰ A.E., RUSSIE, 140, no. 191.

was said. The recognition of Prussia and Austria, without whose help England and Russia could do nothing, was, as we have seen, gained as a kind of by-product of the German revolution. Thus the end of 1802 found France in complete control of northern and central Italy—in less than a year the diplomacy of the Consulate had here achieved as much as a successful war could have done.

In respect to Holland and Switzerland the policy of the Republic was as aggressive, if not as definitely conclusive. At Luneville the French Republic had pledged itself to evacuate both of these countries after the general peace. During the summer of 1801 the Dutch were able to secure a reduction of the occupying forces to 10,000 men, a concession for which they had to pay the enormous sum of 5,000,000 florins.³¹ On the inspiration of the First Consul the Batavian government submitted a new constitution to popular vote. The dislike of French domination was such that the Dutch people voted it down three to one, but Bonaparte, putting forward the original argument that silence signified consent, had all those who had not exercised the franchise counted as having given their approval. At the time of the signature of the Treaty of Amiens, 11,000 Frenchmen under the command of General Victor still occupied the country, being kept there for the avowed and possibly sincere object of embarking for Louisiana from Dutch ports. A month later, however, Victor received orders to keep his command for an indefinite period.³² The outcry in Holland became so great that even the docile Schimmelpenninck, Bonaparte's chief instrument in controlling the government of that country, protested. Finally the promise to evacuate at the end of the republican year (September 23, 1802) was given, and a few days after this date a retrogressive movement was actually commenced. But this came to a halt almost as soon as it had begun,

³¹ Convention of Aug. 29, 1801. G. de Martens, *Recueil des traités*, VII, 368–373.

³² April 27, 1802. L. de Brotonne, *Lettres inédites de Napoléon Ier* (1898), no. 42.

the announcement being made that the troops would embark at Vlissingen for Louisiana as soon as ships could be provided. So the French army remained in southern Holland, while the Batavian government was obliged to continue the payments for its support. Like his predecessors, the First Consul was forced by financial embarrassment to maintain a large part of the Republic's forces beyond her borders. His Dutch policy in particular was motivated to a larger extent by this consideration than by any deliberate expansionist program.

In Switzerland the First Consul's diplomacy was also making hay while the sun of peace shone. In the Treaty of Luneville the freedom of the Swiss in choosing whatever form of government suited them had been affirmed, but at Amiens the question was not commented upon. That this selection would proceed along orderly lines was not to be expected, for the Swiss were divided into two bitterly opposed parties: the liberally inclined Unionists, who looked to France for guidance, and the strongly oligarchic Federalists. The situation soon approached a state of civil war. In his celebrated proclamation of St. Cloud the First Consul announced, rather than offered, his mediation to the Swiss, while General Ney was instructed to concentrate his troops on the Helvetian frontier. On October 2 Bonaparte wrote to Ney that the Consular proclamation would certainly arrive at Berne before the twelfth; thus it ought to be known by the eighteenth or nineteenth whether the Swiss deputies had dissolved. If they should refuse to do so, Ney was to enter the country immediately.⁸³

The renewal of French intervention in Switzerland was received by the powers with varied sentiments. Prussia was still intimately associated with France in the settlement of the German indemnities issue and hardly cared to endanger this accord by opposing her on a question which was not a particular Prussian interest. Austria was negotiating at Paris for an improved establishment for Archduke Ferdinand, and

⁸³ Proclamation of Sept. 30, 1802. *Corr.*, VIII, no. 6352. Orders on Ney's movements. *Ibid.*, VIII, nos. 6351, 6352, 6359.

Bonaparte was perfectly aware that there was no danger whatever of interference from this direction.³⁴ In England, on the other hand, the outcry reached dangerous proportions. "This affair of Switzerland makes the greatest possible sensation here," wrote a secret French agent, an officer named Beauvoisins, from London.³⁵ Hawkesbury and Addington plainly showed their inquietude in conversations with Otto,³⁶ but the greatest demonstration of indignation came from the ranks of the parliamentary opposition. Though usually friendly to revolutionary France, the Whigs were in this case outraged by what seemed to them a palpable interference with a free people's right of self-determination. They were all the more inclined to press the question since the ministry at first appeared reluctant to do so. "These members of the opposition," declared Beauvoisins, "will change their opinions tomorrow and demand war if the ministry should wish the continuance of peace. It is ever with this spirit of contradiction that they think and act."

On October 10 Hawkesbury presented a note to Otto in which the alarm of the British government at the prospect of French intervention in Switzerland was expressed.³⁷ "The march of your troops," said the foreign minister personally to the French envoy, "will be regarded by the majority of the British nation, and consequently by its ministry, as an act of hostility."³⁸ This bellicose language was accompanied by measures which spoke even more eloquently. The British chargé d'affaires at Paris, Merry, had already accepted a memorandum from the conservatively inclined Swiss envoy,

³⁴ In this connection he said to Roederer: "La maison d'Autriche me laissera faire tout ce que je voudrai. Je me ferais demain premier landamann de la Suisse; j'en ferais une province de France, ce serait indifférent." Roederer, *Autour de Bonaparte* (1909), p. 163.

³⁵ Beauvoisins made his reports to the First Consul by the medium of Bourrienne, who prepared a résumé of what seemed significant for his chief. The report cited above is that of the 3 frimaire an XI (Nov. 24, 1802). A.N., AF IV, 1672, I, 80.

³⁶ Otto to Talleyrand, 16 vendémiaire an XI (Oct. 8, 1802). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 10.

³⁷ Note dated Oct. 9, 1802; copy in *Paget Papers*, II, 62.

³⁸ Otto to Talleyrand, 3 brumaire an XI (Oct. 25, 1802). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 22.

Stapfer, in which the protection of the powers against France was urgently solicited.³⁹ On the same day that Otto received the British note, the capable Under-Secretary of State Moore secretly left London on a mission to the continent. As the speed with which the First Consul arrived at a settlement of Swiss affairs brought about Moore's return home almost immediately after his arrival at Constance, British historians have tended to represent his mission as a mere harmless intrigue. Yet even his instructions as they were published the following year show a surprisingly forward tendency in British policy. He was not only to inform himself fully on the exact state of the situation, but also to encourage and stimulate the oligarchic party, promise British protection in case of its willingness to resist French intervention, and even offer subsidies if such should be considered necessary.⁴⁰

Simultaneously with the departure of Moore and the delivery of the note to Otto, Hawkesbury had directed instructions to Paget, the British ambassador to the Hofburg, which ordered him to ". . . ascertain with as much precision as possible, the sentiments of the Austrian government relative to the affairs of Switzerland, especially whether they have afforded or, in any event, intend to afford to the Swiss Cantons any effectual assistance in their opposition to the menaces or hostility of France." If the Hofburg should show itself favorably inclined, Paget was to inform it of Moore's mission. He was also to ". . . convey to the public in general, and particularly to the party in opposition to the French Government, the sentiments of universal indignation which the conduct of the First Consul has aroused in this country."⁴¹ In effect these measures of the Addington government indicated a momentary readiness to yield to popular clamor and take issue with France on her intervention in Switzerland, even facing the

³⁹ Stapfer's memorandum was enclosed by Merry in his dispatch of October 3. *The Parliamentary History*, vol. XXXVI, no. 16.

⁴⁰ *The New Annual Register for . . . 1803* (1804), pp. 673 ff.

⁴¹ Oct. 10, 1802. *Paget Papers*, II, 61.

resulted in a considerable increase in Russian ambitions. The principal representative of this tendency was the Chancellor, Count Feodor Vassilievitch Rostopchine, a rather miserable figure,⁴ from whom one would hardly expect such grand pretensions as those expressed in a memorandum which he presented to the Tsar on October 1, 1800. After sketching the European situation and the role which Russia could and ought to play, he summed up his viewpoint with: "Russia, as much by her position as by her inexhaustible resources, is and must be the first power in the world." He maintained, one must admit with much justice, that all of the continental powers were in a position in which the good will of Russia was essential to them: Bonaparte was soliciting the Tsar's support in order to facilitate the conclusion of peace with England,⁵ Prussia depended on Russia for the assurance of a favorable indemnity for her losses beyond the Rhine, and Austria required Russian support against France. Yet, in spite of this preponderant position, Russia would, with the exception of Austria, be the only power without appreciable territorial gains (he apparently counted the larger part of Poland for nothing) and was justified in demanding compensation. For its achievement an active policy would be necessary — Frederick the Great had shown the way by demonstrating the importance and possibility of partitions.

The most likely field of partition that could occur to Rostopchine was of course the Ottoman Empire. For Russia he had naturally selected the lion's share with Moldavia, Roumania,⁶ and Bulgaria; that Roumelia with Constantinople would also be part of her gains is at least indicated in the context. Austria was to receive Bosnia, Serbia, and Walachia, and France Egypt,

⁴ Schiemann speaks of him as "ein kriechender Höfling und Intrigant, ein erbärmlicher Wicht." *Die Ermordung Pauls und die Thronbesteigung Nikolaus I* (1902), p. 2.

⁵ Paul's comment in the margin here is. "Il peut réussir."

⁶ As "Roumania" then consisted of Moldavia and Walachia, Rostopchine probably had become confused in his geography. Ori ult (*Napoléon et l'Europe: la politique extérieure*, p. 41), apparently for this reason, has him include Walachia in Russia's share, but as the Chancellor expressly assigns it to Austria, this cannot have been his intention.

as in France, it was to be impressed upon the nobles that their safety depended upon his protection.

In any case, there was no question in the mind of Bonaparte but that the Swiss very properly belonged to the French sphere of interest. This opinion he quite frankly expressed to the deputies of the Cantons, when they appeared at Paris to deliberate upon their constitution: "All Europe expects France to restore order in Switzerland; it recognizes that Italy and Holland are at the disposal of France like Switzerland." The First Consul's deep resentment against what he regarded as the insolent challenge of Great Britain on a question which did not concern her also found expression in his discourses before the assembled deputies: "I declare to you that I would rather sacrifice 100,000 men than to suffer that England should mix in your affairs, for, if one official word, be it in the London Gazette or in the diplomatic relations, had been given out by the cabinet of St. James, the question would have been settled — I would have united you to France."⁴⁴ This dictatorial pronouncement was quite characteristic of Bonaparte's attitude throughout the conferences which decided the fate of Switzerland. In effect, everything of importance was decided by him, and the Act of Mediation, though a landmark in the constitutional development of the Swiss Confederation, practically placed the country at his disposal.⁴⁵

Thus in the midst of peace the tentacles of French domination had spread and fastened more securely upon the girdle of states which surrounded the Republic. By February of 1803 North and Central Italy, Switzerland, and Holland were more firmly bound to France than ever before; Spain was still a subservient ally; and South Germany had come to look to Paris for guidance and patronage. Everywhere the sphere of French influence seemed to be taking on imperial proportions.

⁴⁴ The official versions of the First Consul's speeches are given in *Corr.*, VIII, nos. 6483, 6560. A more reliable source is probably a report of Stapfer's of February 3, 1802, from which the above quotation is taken. *Bonaparte, Talleyrand and Stapfer, 1800-1803*, pp. 231 ff.

⁴⁵ For text see G. de Martens, *Recueil des traités*, VII, 567-656; *Corr.*, VIII,

And it is noteworthy that almost everything had been done without the use of force. Neither the letter nor the spirit of any of the treaties which had brought to an end the war of the Second Coalition had been violated, least of all the Treaty of Amiens. The process of aggrandizement had gone forward smoothly as the direct and natural result of the French victories during the Revolution. It would probably have taken place under any capable government, though another could hardly have realized so astonishingly upon its potentialities. One can well agree with Talleyrand when he maintains:

It can be said without the least exaggeration, at the time of the Peace of Amiens France enjoyed abroad such power, such glory, and such influence, that the most ambitious spirit could hardly desire more for his country. And what rendered this situation even more marvelous, was the rapidity with which it had been created. In less than two years and a half, that is to say from the 18th brumaire (November 9, 1799) to March 25, 1802, the date of the Peace of Amiens, France had passed from the debasement into which the Directory had plunged her to the first place in Europe.⁴⁶

Before concluding this survey of the "conquests in peace," we must take a brief glance at the colonial policy of the Consulate. There has been much difference of opinion concerning the nature of Bonaparte's colonial system. Some have contended that he sought a great colonial empire, including Egypt, Australia, and even a part of the Spanish possessions in America. Others see in his colonial policy, as far as the Western Hemisphere was concerned, only a means to weaken England by providing the basis for future naval expansion. This is especially the view of those who are convinced that in the final analysis Bonaparte's real goal lay in the East. It is certainly true that the West never held the same fascination for the adventurous Corsican as did the Orient, for the rapid development of so much unoccupied land was manifestly impossible. Yet the importance of the old French West Indian possessions at a time when the Republic's commerce needed every possible stimulus was not to be overlooked. Under the old monarchy

⁴⁶ Talleyrand, *Mémoires*, I, 286.

instructed to draw up a letter to the Russian Vice-Chancellor, Count Nikita Panin, in which, after scoring the ungenerous refusal of the English and Austrians to give up any of their own prisoners to secure the liberation of the Russians, in spite of the English holding captive over 20,000 Frenchmen, the offer was made to return the Tsar's troops with new arms, uniforms, and their own flags without any condition whatsoever. It would only be necessary to let the French government know what route the Emperor wished his troops to take.¹ The matter was still being considered in St. Petersburg, when Bonaparte wrote his famous personal letter to Paul, in which he offered to give up Malta to him as the rightful Grand Master of the Order, and suggested that it be garrisoned by the released prisoners. This was a very master stroke, for, as the island was on the point of falling into the hands of the British, it would only further embroil them with Paul.

The news of the First Consul's proposals created an immense sensation in St. Petersburg. Paul was touched by what he regarded as an act of true chivalry. General Sprengporten, a Swedish adventurer in the Russian service, was delegated to conduct the prisoners to Russia. In the instructions signed by Paul himself the community of interest of France and Russia in contrast to the rest of Europe was stressed. Sprengporten was authorized to express these sentiments as those of the Tsar everywhere.² The general, a man with a lively taste for mixing in political affairs, had his head quite turned by the consideration shown him as "Russian ambassador" in Paris. The First Consul and Talleyrand apparently hoped to inveigle him into commitments which he had not been authorized to make, much in the same fashion as they had done with the Austrian envoy, Count Saint-Julien, the previous summer.³

At St. Petersburg the new turn of affairs had in the meantime

¹ F. Martens, *Recueil des traités et conventions conclus par la Russie*, XIII, 250 ff.

² Instructions of Sept. 28 [Russian style]. Copy A.E., RUSSIE, 140, no. 2.

³ For a study of this episode see A. Fournier, "Die Mission des Grafen von Saint-Julien in Jahre 1800," in *Historische Studien und Skizzen* (1885).

thusiasm about these proposals. To his master he freely expressed his doubts regarding the supposed reversal of Russia's Turkish policy. Should Bonaparte's version be confirmed, however, it would be difficult if not impossible for Austria to avoid acquiescence. In the meantime Cobenzl had enough to concern him in puzzling over the dilemma of how to secure a satisfactory indemnity for the Grand Duke of Tuscany without having to resort to secularization in Germany. The sole possible solution was to find it in Italy, but when Cobenzl approached Bonaparte with this suggestion, he angrily exclaimed that nothing less than a successful war would enable Austria to cross the Adige. Resigning himself to this categorical rejection, the Austrian then sought to gain French agreement to the broadest possible interpretation of the Grand Duke's losses in fixing his indemnity. Bonaparte held him off for a time, but finally, irritated by the continued haggling for a full and complete (*plein et entière*) indemnity as guaranteed by the Treaty of Luneville, cried out: "Ah, 'full and complete,' that is part of every treaty: but without convulsing Germany and making new enemies you will not receive more than Salzburg."¹⁷ It ought thus to have been quite plain to the cabinet at Vienna that the First Consul had no intention of joining Austria in an alliance, and the more able and well-informed of her representatives gave every possible warning of the true state of affairs,¹⁸ yet he managed to give Cobenzl just enough encouragement to make him feel doubtful about breaking off the negotiations. So the affair dragged on inconclusively, when the news of the death of Paul I changed the entire aspect of the diplomatic panorama of Europe.

¹⁷ Cobenzl to Francis, April 19, 1801. S.-A., *FRANKREICH*, 262, IV, fol. 65-70. The same violent statement was repeated in a conversation of a month later. Cobenzl to Francis, May 19, 1801. *Ibid.*, 262, V, fol. 48-63.

¹⁸ An example is Starhemberg's report of March 24, 1801, in which he says that every day he has more reason to believe "... qu'il se trame un nouveau plan de perfidie à nos dépens entre la Prusse, la République, et la Russie. Bonaparte veut à tout prix conserver l'amitié de Paul I tant qu'il la juge nécessaire à ses intérêts, et il est disposé à y tout sacrifier. Je sais qu'il veut nous leurrer de vaines espérances et se faire ensuite un mérite à Petersburg de les avoir déjoués." S.-A., *ENGLAND*, 187, fol. 340-341.

herself to be inveigled into a bargain which she later felt herself incapable of living up to, for the peace she had signed was the utter negation of every principle for which her traditions commanded her to fight to the bitter end. Not only was the balance of power on the Continent overthrown, but all the axioms of this doctrine were equally strained. In addition to this, the great French colonial empire, which the cherished peace of 1763 was thought to have abolished for all time, seemed on the point of being re-established.

Yet, while the mass of Englishmen had become sensitive to the spread of French domination and influence through Central and Southern Europe, as well as apprehensive of the colonial projects ascribed to Bonaparte, there would hardly have been sufficient feeling to bring about a rupture if there had not been another consideration which affected the island kingdom even more closely. The chief reason for the entrance of Britain into the war against France in 1793 had been the occupation of Belgium and the consequent opening of the Scheldt. Her motive was defensive in a commercial as well as a military sense, for she felt her continental trade threatened at one of its principal points of contact. During the wars of the Revolution the overseas commerce of the Republic passed almost entirely into British hands, so that the total foreign trade of the three kingdoms rose from forty-four and a half million pounds in 1792 to over seventy-three million in 1800. Yet the national debt was also increasing at such a staggering rate that the war could hardly be regarded as a profitable one. England was therefore inclined to accept a peace which sacrificed her influence on the Continent, but only if her old commercial relations were not thereby endangered. As soon as peace with the Republic seemed probable, the hope that it would be accompanied by a great expansion of trade with the Continent was frequently uttered. "Our commerce will penetrate deep into France itself and flourish at Paris," prophesied Lord Minto, one of the foremost British statesmen.³ It was confi-

³ *Life and Letters of the Earl of Minto*, III, 209.

dently expected that France would show little reluctance about renewing the commercial treaty of 1786, which had been so very advantageous to England. That this hope could be entertained at all shows how little the British people and government understood the new France which had arisen from the ashes of the revolutionary chaos.

The Eden Treaty, named after its British negotiator, has well been termed one of the worst mistakes ever made by a French government. One British writer has characterized it as a master stroke of Pitt's, ". . . by which, alone, he amply repaid the treacherous advantage taken by Louis and Vergennes of our difficulties in America."⁴ Instead of the previous absolute prohibition of the introduction of British goods, they were to be admitted at duties ranging from about 10 to 15 per cent. In return France was promised a reduction of the duties on her wines to the level of the rate then levied on those of Portugal. But the British, as the Methuen Treaty indeed obliged them to do, made a parallel reduction on Portuguese wines, so that the French product was still discriminated against. France thus gained next to nothing by the arrangement, while her losses far exceeded previous estimates. Arthur Young reports at length upon the outcry in the French towns against the treaty, particularly in Normandy, where the textile industry was practically ruined. Even the silk industry was seriously affected by the substitution of English cottons. Large numbers of unemployed from the northern districts drifted into Paris to swell the mobs of the Revolution. In every conceivable way the country had been made to feel the bad bargain which the government had made. Public opinion would now have cried out against the renewal of so disastrous an arrangement.

In 1802 the situation in France was indeed even less favorable to a commercial understanding with Great Britain than it had been before the Revolution. The country was developing and expanding not only politically, but also commercially and industrially. Yet the chaos of the Revolution had prevented

⁴ Esmé Wingfield-Stratford, *The History of English Patriotism* (1913), II, 33.

Austrian alliance, still found it to his advantage to play off the Austrian proposals against those of Russia and Prussia.

Of the impression gained by the Austrian emissary from his first official audience with the First Consul his report to the Emperor Francis bears eloquent testimony. The apparently unexpected pomp and ceremony, the respectful, almost submissive demeanor of Talleyrand, the self-effacement of the Second and Third Consuls, "*toujours dans leur rôle et contenance subalterne*" — all combined to signify the presence of but a single master. "In this manner," he concludes his reflections, "a little Corsican gentleman, become in fact King of France, maintains a court perhaps more brilliant than that of the unhappy Louis XVI, who at any rate never exercised an equal authority."¹⁰

In the interview of three hours which succeeded the formal audience Cobenzl could discover little cause for satisfaction. His first vague suggestions of a more intimate union between the two countries were met by the brutally frank query: "What would France have to gain by such an alliance?" Yet the First Consul had no intention of discouraging Austria's hopes entirely, for it was in every way to his advantage to keep Cobenzl at Paris in the role of suppliant. Austria would be less likely to make similar advances in other quarters, while the governments of Berlin and St. Petersburg would be stimulated to greater pliability by the spectacle offered by their competitor. It was of course necessary to convince Cobenzl of the complete harmony arrived at between France and Russia. To the Austrian envoy the First Consul was effusive in his expressions of admiration for Paul I, whom he represented as in accord with himself even to the extent of a projected division of Turkey. Here alone, he indicated, was the point where Austria might hope to tie up with the French system. By extending her frontiers to the Black Sea she could assure herself of an excellent indemnification for her losses in the recent war.

It cannot be said that Cobenzl evinced any particular en-

¹⁰ March 12, 1801. S.-A., FRANKREICH, 262, fol. 23-34.

regarding Paul's demise reached Paris. The certainty of Russia's now being a neutral instead of an ally made it less imperative to show her such consideration, while it was also deemed desirable to place England before a *fait accompli*. The preliminary step to the annexation of Piedmont, its organization into a French military division, was therefore immediately taken.⁴ To give this procedure the air of being independent of the event with which it was so vitally connected, the decree was antedated to April 2.⁵ A few days later Saint-Marsan was requested to quit France; he changed his tone considerably and even seemed inclined to negotiate on the French basis, but Bonaparte was no longer willing to compromise. When the first week of July found the Sardinian envoy still in Paris, he was obliged to leave under threat of ejection by the police.

The pacific trend which had also begun to sweep England by the spring of 1801 found its motivation in considerations similar to those which influenced French policy. Without allies on the Continent the war against France could only end in a stalemate — but the era of coalitions seemed to have passed. The feeling on the Continent had, in fact, become more anti-British than anti-French, the result partly of the unpopularity of England's practices at sea, partly of the growing conviction that it was too frequently her policy to inveigle others into doing her fighting for her. "The dominant principle of European politics," says Gentz in a contemporary memorandum, "and the dominant principle of all the political thinkers and writers is at this moment — the jealousy of British power."⁶

Britain had also nearly reached the limit of what she could hope in the way of colonial conquests, and the prolongation of the struggle did not seem to promise more in this direction. Moreover, in spite of the ignominious collapse of the League of

⁴ Arrêt consulaire of April 12 (April 2), 1801. *Corr.*, VII, no. 5526.

⁵ Letter to Berthier of April 12, 1801: "Vous ferez attention qu'il (l'arrêt) est antidaté de dix jours: cela est fait avec intention." *Ibid.*, VII, no. 5525.

⁶ Carysfort to Grenville, Nov. 12, 1800. *Manuscripts of J. B. Fortescue*, VI, 375.

insight the foremost French journalist, Joseph Fiévée, wrote from London in the summer of 1802:

It was in the hope of a treaty of commerce that the city of London exerted itself for peace: all its inquietude today is to know why there is none as yet and whether there will be one soon. I am persuaded that tomorrow all voices will be for war, if the English people, finally conscious of our power, realize that they cannot obtain a treaty of commerce from us except by force of arms.⁹

The First Consul on his part was perfectly aware that France herself would benefit by a reasonable arrangement, for in the uncertain state of things commerce could not flourish. The French merchants were by no means entirely in accord with the manufacturers, there being a considerable profit in the sale of British goods, for which many people entertained a marked preference.¹⁰ The First Consul intimated to the British government therefore that he was inclined to accept a sort of reciprocity treaty by which each country would agree to take a fixed quantity of the other's merchandise. Such a limited arrangement did not suit the British, who, moreover, hardly stood to benefit thereby. Yet this was the limit of concession to which the First Consul was willing to go for the time being.

The more general question as to how far Bonaparte worked for or welcomed the renewal of war is more difficult of analysis. It is quite probable that the First Consul was honestly convinced that a frank rapprochement with England was out of the question, and it is certainly true that only a complete change in his political system could have made any such possible. The contrast between his views and inclinations and those of Talleyrand was particularly noticeable in their attitude toward England. It is not that Bonaparte was obsessed with an ingrained hatred of the island kingdom. As a young

⁹ A.N., AF IV, 1672, Plaque I, fol. 70.

¹⁰ On July 11, 1802, the Prefecture of Police reports: "En général les marchands se plaignent de l'état de commerce; ils disent qu'ils ne vendent absolument rien, et que l'on n'a jamais vu autant de billets protestés. Ils attendent avec impatience le traité de commerce avec l'Angleterre, et ils espèrent que les affaires alors reprendront." F. A. Aulard, *Paris sous le Consulat*, III, 149.

officer he had studied English constitutional history and probably knew it better than that of France. Even during the days of his greatest hatred of his rival he could not hide his respect for the English people — in his eyes they and the French were the only two really great nations. But he always realized that Britain was bound to be the inevitable limiting factor in his path. To Talleyrand, on the other hand, England, like Austria, was a solid element in the European system, for whose coöperation one ought to be willing to sacrifice much. A hostile England, he felt, would remain a center for endless coalitions. Mirabeau, to whom he had confided his ideas, wrote to him while on his mission to Berlin: "There is only one project vast enough to conciliate everybody, to terminate everything: it is yours, which, in bringing about the disappearance not only of the rivalries of commerce, but also of the absurd and bloody feuds to which they give birth, would confide to the care of France and of England the peace and the liberty of the two worlds."¹¹ Even in 1801-1803 Talleyrand seems to have considered an understanding with England on the basis of equal protection of commercial interests entirely feasible. To Bonaparte such a rapprochement appeared neither practicable nor desirable. In the final analysis he probably had a far clearer view of the situation than Talleyrand. Even with commercial concessions it was extremely doubtful whether Britain would permanently tolerate a France predominant on the Continent, in possession of Belgium and the left bank of the Rhine, and with a colonial empire in the heart of North America. A conflict at one point or another was sooner or later bound to come — it was merely a question of time. Was it not, therefore, the best policy for France to make no sacrifices which would weaken her economically?

A more just criticism can be directed against the First Consul's manner of procedure, which often approached a height of arrogance little in consonance with the objectives of his

¹¹ M. Paléologue, *Talleyrand, Metternich, Chateaubriand* (1924), p. 12.

kingdom of Etruria. Even so the execution of this portion of the treaty depended upon the ability of the French to dispose of the objections of Austria. As long as the war with England lasted, the value of Louisiana to the First Consul was of course equally negligible. For the development of this colony, the recovery of Haiti from the revolted blacks, and the revival of French overseas trade, peace with the leading maritime power was an absolute essential. For France the war was thus rapidly losing its *raison d'être*: it no longer offered opportunities for aggrandizement, blocked the re-establishment of national prosperity, and above all else, no longer offered any reasonable prospect for decisive victory.

There can be little question but that the First Consul perceived all this immediately on the receipt of the news of Paul's assassination. His first act was the decision of the fate of Piedmont, which had been left undetermined at Luneville. It appears that for a time, anxious to placate the Tsar, who betrayed a very lively interest in the House of Savoy, he actually had considered the restoration of the larger part of Piedmont. As much at least was indicated by the annexation, in September of 1800, of all territory east of the Sesia to the Cisalpine Republic. This act was apparently motivated by the consideration that if Piedmont should be returned to the Sardinian monarchy, the section which controlled the approach to the Simplon pass would remain under French domination. Shortly after, the Piedmontese diplomat Saint-Marsan was invited to Paris. But Charles Emmanuel of Sardinia spoiled his chances by dilatory tactics, his minister not arriving in the French capital until February 16, 1801. The negotiations soon came to a deadlock, for each side put forward screens of demands which the other found it inconvenient even to treat upon. Saint-Marsan wanted the restoration of Piedmont to be made the preliminary basis of any discussion, while the First Consul replied that nothing could be done until Sardinia had closed her harbors to British shipping.³ Matters stood at this point, when the information

³ Correspondence with Saint-Marsan. A.E., SARDAIGNE, 281.

willing to meet the Russians halfway on their other propositions. But Kalytcheff haggled over every point, until Bonaparte lost patience and was about to send Duroc to St. Petersburg to appeal directly to the Tsar when the news of Paul's death reached Paris.

"The news of the death of Paul has been a veritable thunderbolt for Bonaparte," wrote the Prussian envoy, Lucchesini. "On receiving it from Talleyrand, he uttered a cry of despair, and he has given himself up to the idea that the death has not been a natural one, the blow originating in England. He believes he has lost his strongest support against her, for he had hoped to find in Paul what Frederick II found in Peter III."¹¹ It is not difficult to comprehend the First Consul's emotion, when one considers the change which this event brought about in his position. He was thereby deprived of all means to strike England except by those of direct invasion. The situation of Britain before the death of Paul was indeed a very precarious one: France, Spain, and Holland were arrayed against her in open war; Sweden, Denmark, Russia, and Prussia faced her in the League of Armed Neutrality; Austria and Naples had abandoned her even diplomatically; Portugal was soon to be compelled to follow suit. She was as completely isolated as France had been in 1793, though her insular position still made her invulnerable against direct attack. She was being assailed in her commerce and in her chief continental connection (Hanover), while the most valuable portion of her colonial empire, India, was being threatened with invasion.

The death of Paul I, together with the attack upon Copenhagen, put an end to the Armed Neutrality. Sweden and Denmark came to terms with England in May, and on June 17 a treaty was signed by the latter with Russia, in which, although agreeing to the principle that a blockade had to be effective in order to be valid, Britain secured the recognition of the right of search. Paul's projected expedition against India, which had

¹¹ Report of April 17, 1801. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, 38.

Consul at that time. The use of military men as diplomatic agents had already been common during the later part of the Revolution,¹⁰ for the large majority of the trained diplomats of the old school had emigrated. The practice was widely extended during the Consulate, particularly as Bonaparte considered it desirable to keep his generals occupied.

The instructions issued to Andréossy give the best possible résumé of the chief points of French policy in regard to England. Talleyrand, their immediate author, began by the declaration that the origin of the last war had lain in the pretension of the British government to mix in continental affairs: "The first care of the ambassador of the Republic must be to put off on every occasion all intervention of the British government on the Continent." Of significance is the appreciation of the importance of the commercial question and an unexpected readiness to meet England halfway in this connection:

He must show himself prompt to follow all discussions which would have for their object the execution of the Treaty of Amiens and the re-establishment of commercial relations between the two countries. . . . The whole benefit of the peace for England being in the extension of her commerce, she sees with impatience the continued existence of the general prohibitions which were erected against her during the war.

But, says Talleyrand, France could not suddenly raise these barriers without serious prejudice to her own industry, which, in spite of recent progress, was not yet in a position to compete with England. Yet, to assist in the adoption of a system of reciprocal advantage, the First Consul was dispatching Citizen Coquebert-Montbret as Commissioner of Commercial Relations. Andréossy, on his part, was to express in general but forcible terms the readiness of the First Consul gradually to soften the measures of exclusion and to substitute for them, not a commercial treaty, which could only be the work of much time and reflection, but a series of particular arrange-

¹⁰ An interesting study in this connection is A. Dry, *Soldats ambassadeurs sous le Directoire, an IV-VIII* (1906).

ments and compensations calculated to protect the respective commercial interests of the two nations.¹⁷

As far as the Treaty of Amiens was concerned, Andréossy was at all times to request on the part of England, and promise on the part of France, the most complete and literal execution of its provisions. It seems to have been realized that the question of Malta would provide the greatest difficulty in the future, for in regard to it the ambassador was to receive a series of more specific instructions later. A great deal of emphasis was also placed upon points connected with the political interests of the French government. On appropriate occasions and with varying degrees of force Andréossy was to request the removal from London of the bishops who had not given their resignation to the Pope, the prohibition of the wearing of Bourbon orders, the sending of the Bourbon princes and their adherents to Russia, and the expulsion of Georges Cadoudal and other notorious royalist conspirators. He was also to keep the British government fully "informed" on the internal affairs of France, laying special stress on the harmony between the various elements. Finally, Andréossy was to keep his government regularly informed on the political, commercial, military, and naval affairs of Great Britain, and at the end of each year he was to make a general report on his own negotiations, outstanding events, changes in ceremonial, and similar matters.¹⁸ These were hardly instructions for an ambassador whose residence at the court to which he was accredited was to be a temporary one, nor were they drawn up by a government which intended at the first opportunity to force a quarrel upon the

¹⁷ Through the reports of the Prefecture of Police the First Consul was constantly kept informed of the state of opinion among the English in Paris. Thus one report reads: "Les Anglais paraissent fort impatients de savoir s'il y aura bientôt un traité de commerce entre eux et nous. Ils disaient que, si ce traité n'avait pas lieu, ils étaient perdus." The next day the recital goes on: "Ils parlent toujours fréquemment du traité de commerce; ils assuraient hier que, si le gouvernement français exigeait 10,000,000 sterling pour le conclure, on ne balancerait pas à les accorder." Oct. 12 and 13, 1802. Aulard, *Paris sous le Consulat*, III, 311-314.

¹⁸ Instructions under date of the 12 messidor an X (July 1, 1802); original copy signed by Talleyrand. A.E., ANGLETERRE, supplément 15, no. 66.

winter. By a ukase of November 15 the Anglophile Vice-Chancellor Panin was banished to his estate. Extraordinary pressure was put upon Prussia and the Scandinavian states to enter into the projected union for the defense of neutral rights. On December 16 treaties to that effect were concluded at St. Petersburg with Sweden and Denmark; two days later followed a similar one with Prussia.¹² No possible means of embarrassing the British was neglected. As early as August 29 Paul had pronounced the sequestration of the property of British subjects within his dominions. When his demand for the surrender of Malta was refused, a general embargo on English vessels was declared. Prussia was obliged to occupy Hanover and close the mouths of the Elbe and the Weser to British shipping. From the Baltic to the Adriatic only the coast of Portugal continued to offer a friendly welcome to the merchant navies of Albion.

The necessity of replacing Sprengporten by a better qualified ambassador could not be ignored at St. Petersburg. But Kalytcheff, who arrived at Paris in the first week of March, 1801, was a narrow, stiff-necked aristocrat of pronounced Francophobe tendency. His reports to the Tsar were far from complimentary to the Consular regime, and in the conferences between him and Talleyrand it soon became very evident that there was a wide difference of opinion on the details of the projected pacification. Even before the preparation of his memorandum of October 1, Rostopchine had formulated five basic conditions of any peace with France: the restoration of Malta to the Knights of St. John, the re-establishment of the King of Sardinia in his possessions on the Italian mainland, and the territorial integrity of Sicily, Bavaria, and Württemberg.¹³ But Kalytcheff went beyond this and demanded the evacuation of Egypt. To this the First Consul was far from ready to agree, though he was

¹² F. Martens, *Recueil des traités et conventions conclus par la Russie*, VI, 286 ff.

¹³ A statement of these conditions, dated September 26, 1800, and signed by Rostopchine, is found in A.E., RUSSIE, 140, no. 1. It was apparently delivered by Sprengporten.

better than they had been since the signature of the definite peace. The pacific intentions of the First Consul are amply evidenced by the instructions given Andréossy, while the Addington ministry perceived that the only hope of its preservation lay in the maintenance of peace; for gentlemen who professed to regard themselves as temporary stopgaps they clung to office with singular tenacity. They were indeed in a particularly odious dilemma: Under the stress of war the country would surely call for Pitt, but the same would result from too great a loss of dignity in the government's efforts to preserve peace. The general position of the ministry had also become exceedingly insecure, for while Pitt had not yet openly declared against it, he had for some time withdrawn his active support. An interesting insight into the change in Pitt's sentiments is given by a conversation recorded in his diary by Malmsbury only a very few days after the signature of the definitive peace at Amiens:

He [Pitt] owned that he had, when the preliminaries were signed, thought that Bonaparte had satisfied his insatiable ambition, and would rest contented with the power and reputation he had acquired; . . . that, however, all that had passed since went to convince him he had been in error, and that the electing himself President of the Italian Republic, the attainment of Louisiana, the two Floridas [an unbased assumption], and the island of Elba, left no doubt in his mind that he was, and ever would remain, the same rapacious, insatiable plunderer, with as little good faith and as little to be relied upon as he formerly found him to be, and that, in consequence he (Mr. Pitt) was obliged to return to his former opinions, and to declare that no compact, no covenant, made with him, could be secure; that still he did not regret having spoken in favor of the peace — it was become a necessary measure; and rest for England, however short, was desirable. [Pitt went on to advocate] . . . an aspect of war; that we should appear warlike in our provincial measures, warlike in our diplomatic ones, and, above all, warlike in our military and naval establishments, so that it might be evident to Bonaparte that England will submit to no insult, nor suffer any injury. A very few years of peace would be fully sufficient to enable England to go on (if provoked to it) with many years of war.²¹

²¹ April 8, 1802. Malmsbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 67.

Malmsbury, a thoroughgoing Jacobin-hater, characterized this long exposition of Pitt's as ". . . the best, indeed, the only good apology, I have as yet heard for the peace, if it can so be called, for it breathed war as much as any of Windham's speeches." In any case, it is quite plain that nothing more was to be hoped from Pitt in support of a consistent peace policy. For the time being the Addington ministry cast loose from its ultraconservative connections and followed a more independent policy along conciliatory lines. In one of his last conversations with Otto, Addington made it a point to speak of Bonaparte in flattering terms. He expressed his satisfaction at everything which tended to increase the power of the First Consul within France and even affirmed that he would view with the greatest pleasure the establishment of an hereditary form of government in the Bonaparte family. "But," the prime minister went on to say, "everything which tends to aggrandize this power beyond the frontiers of France must necessarily fix the attention of this government, though one should not attribute this resistance to any other sentiment than that of its duty towards the English nation."²²

It was thus the announced intention of the British government to assume an attitude of watchful waiting. On the Continent France had apparently reached the limit of her conquests in peace, but there was much apprehension regarding her views on the Orient. It was in this direction that the First Consul now seemed to be turning his attention, for he had finally arrived at a definite settlement with the Porte. On June 26 a treaty had been signed which not only renewed the old capitulations, but also gave France special privileges for her commerce in the Black Sea. The oriental ambitions of the

²² From Otto's dispatch of the 8 brumaire an XI (Oct. 30, 1802). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 30. These statements of Addington demonstrate the irony of the later British denunciations of Napoleon as a usurper. Méneval, indeed, claims that during the negotiations at Amiens ". . . une proposition de reconnaître le premier Consul roi de France fut jetée en avant par le ministre anglais." *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de Napoléon Ier depuis 1802 à 1815* (1894), I, 97.

First Consul were thus given a new impetus; the prospects seemed favorable for the return of France to the dominant position at Constantinople. A sufficiently imposing incumbent for the embassy at the Turkish capital was found in General Brune, a choice which was also motivated by the convenient removal of one of the chief republican malcontents from French soil. The instructions drawn up for Brune give a very good picture of the rôle which the French government hoped to play in the Orient:

The intention of the government is that the ambassador at Constantinople should resume by every means, the supremacy which France has had for two centuries at that capital. The house which is to be occupied by the ambassador is the finest. He must constantly maintain his rank above the ambassadors of other nations, be surrounded with a numerous suite, and take no step without great display. He should take back under his protection all the hospitals and all Christians of Syria and Armenia, and especially all the caravans which visit the Holy Places.²³

Of even greater significance than the mission of Brune was that of Colonel Sebastiani. This young soldier had been entrusted with a task both political and military in nature. He was to embark at Toulon and make for Tripoli, where the Bey was to be induced to recognize the flag of the Italian Republic. His next goal was to be Egypt; here he would take note of the British army which was still at Alexandria, enter into relations with the Turkish Pasha, the Mameluke beys, and the great sheiks, and secure all possible information about the state of the country. After visits to Jaffa and Acre, he was to return to France via Corfu.²⁴ The ostensible and probably the true object of the mission was the extension of French commerce in the regions visited, but it also served as an excellent reconnoitering expedition for any future military venture. It helped to confirm the British in a decision which they had

²³ Oct. 18, 1802. *Corr.*, VIII, no. 6378.

²⁴ Sebastiani's instructions of August and September are in *Corr.*, VIII, nos. 6276, 6308.

already made and which was to be fatal to the cause of peace — the refusal to evacuate the island of Malta.

Malta controlled the route from Toulon to Egypt and had been seized by Bonaparte on his voyage to that country. It had later been taken by the British, who made every effort to secure it at the peace. The First Consul, however, would not listen to any proposals for a cession that would give England the most important station in a sea which he hoped to make into something of a French lake. Therefore the Treaty of Amiens had entered into elaborate details concerning the manner in which Malta was to be returned to the Knights of St. John. The great powers of Europe were to be requested to guarantee the independence and neutrality of the island, which was, within a period of three months, to be handed over to a Grand Master chosen by the Pope.²⁵ But British suspicions had already been awakened during the Congress of Amiens, when the First Consul had shown marked aversion to a guarantee by one or more of the great powers, proposing instead Spain and especially Naples, states which were hardly in a position to be effective guarantors. After the signature of the treaty the attitude of the French government had maintained its equivocal character. Up to August the English ambassadors at Vienna, Berlin, Madrid, and St. Petersburg were given little or no coöperation by their French colleagues in obtaining the guarantee of the powers.²⁶ Only Champagny at the Austrian capital was willing, after much hesitation, to join his efforts to those of Paget for the end in question.²⁷ It is possible that these delays were not intentional, but the effect on British opinion was nevertheless very unfavorable. It was therefore decided to hold on to Malta for the time being. Four days after Whitworth's arrival in Paris, Lord Hawkesbury sent instructions to the ambassador which clearly portrayed the

²⁵ Article X of the treaty. G. de Martens, *Recueil des traités*, VII, 404-413.

²⁶ The reports of the British envoys on this question are given in the *Annual Register for 1803*, pp. 669 ff.

²⁷ Paget to Hawkesbury, April 19, 1803. *Paget Papers*, II, 74-76.

government's determination in this regard. After remarking on the French annexation of Parma and Elba, the dispatch instructs Whitworth on the excuses he is to offer if the evacuation of Malta is demanded for the near future. Above all else he is not to commit himself on the course England will follow, *even if these objections become ineffective*.²⁸ Thus the British government considered it quite conceivable that it might soon violate a treaty which it had barely ratified. It is not until eight days later that we hear for the first time of a suspicion that France has new designs upon Egypt, Whitworth voicing the apprehension that Sebastiani's mission indicated a project for a second conquest.²⁹ Yet these fears were forgotten almost as soon as they arose. On December 1 he philosophizes on the position of the First Consul. Whitworth insists on Napoleon's unpopularity, saying that nine people out of ten not immediately connected with the government reprobated his conduct as strongly as the English did. As the ambassador frequented circles which, like the Faubourg St. Germain, were hardly inclined to be sympathetic to the chief magistrate of the Republic, it is easy to see how he arrived at this opinion. Of greater significance is his conclusion: "It is not the wish of this Government to come to a rupture with Great Britain, but it will always avail itself of our security to carry its projects into effect."³⁰ Much can be said for this point of view — Bonaparte was anxious to avoid war, but he was prone to take the utmost advantage of every opportunity which the negligence or lethargy of his opponents provided for him.

The most disastrous influence upon the course of the negotiations was the constant irritation of the First Consul by the attacks of the British press. A close examination of the sources can leave little doubt about the complete sincerity of his feelings. All of the First Consul's most intimate associates testify

²⁸ Instructions of Nov. 14, 1802. O. Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803, being the Despatches of Lord Whitworth and Others* (1889), p. 7.

²⁹ To Hawkesbury, Nov. 22, 1802. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

to his extreme sensitiveness to newspaper criticism. Chaptal tells of how he had the English journals translated every day by one of his secretaries.⁸¹ Bourrienne expresses the conviction that the annoyance caused Napoleon by the libel campaign against his person was as great a factor in the renewal of war with Great Britain as the political considerations.⁸² The type of criticism and abuse which the British sheets engaged in was indeed of a sort to provoke a less sensitive nature. They maligned the character of the First Consul's wife, insinuated that his relations with his stepdaughter were of a scandalous nature, and spread numberless lies about his past career. What contributed particularly to his resentment was the conviction that the English government could in some way restrain the offenders if it really cared to exert itself.

Long before the signing of the Treaty of Amiens the newspaper offensive against France and the person of its chief magistrate had commenced in England. The latter's irritation was soon reflected in the diplomatic relations, for on February 12, 1802, young George Jackson had occasion to note in his diary: "Everything that is said out of France unfavorable to the wishes of this government is always attributed to one or the other of the foreign ministers, and I dare say they believe that the observations the English papers indulge in originate with my brother."⁸³ Talleyrand complained to Francis Jackson in the bitterest terms, hinting that the French press might be unloosed against England if that on the other side of the Channel did not cease its attacks. Bonaparte also appealed directly to Addington and demanded that, if necessary, he be protected by legislation. The British ministry was not inclined to so drastic a step, the success of which, considering the temper of Parliament, would in any case have been exceedingly doubtful. Addington therefore informed the First Consul that the only way anything could be done would be to bring suit in

⁸¹ *Mes souvenirs sur Napoléon*, p. 349.

⁸² Bourrienne, *Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte*, II, 89.

⁸³ Jackson, *Diaries and Letters*, I, 62, 72.

the courts, a procedure against which he strongly advised, for it would but serve to review the scandal. In 1792, in the famous case of the "Letters of Junius," it had been laid down as a principle of British procedure that the jury and not the judge was to decide what constituted a libel. Precious little could Bonaparte expect of juries which would be only too pleased to believe the libels launched against him. That in spite of this warning the First Consul decided to prefer charges against one of the worst émigré libelists, Jean Peltier, shows how determined he was to grasp at every means to bring such activities to an end. Peltier was, in fact, found guilty and sentenced to pay a heavy fine, but he was more than reimbursed by a huge public subscription and gained considerable notoriety.⁸⁴

Of interest is the First Consul's attempt to buy the silence of the more immoderate sheets. During the summer of 1802 the talented journalist, Joseph Fiévée, was sent to London with the principal objective of studying public opinion. We find no evidence in his reports of any attempt to influence the British press, but in a dispatch of Andréossy's of a much later date the ambassador tells of a conversation with a lady, in which the latter, not being able to recall the author of the novel *Le Dot de Suzette*, referred to him as "*celui qui est venu acheter les journaux.*" "On arriving at London," adds Andréossy, "I sought to exercise some influence on the newspapers; every direct tentative has been unsuccessful, as they still remembered the recent voyage of Citizen Fiévée." That Fiévée had made a mess of things is also evident from the reply of Talleyrand: "As for the journalists, I did have some knowledge of the mission of Citizen Fiévée, but that did not emanate from my department, and the First Consul has charged me to recommend to you only to call the attention of the government to

⁸⁴ In this connection the Prefecture of Police reports Whitworth to have said ". . . que Peltier n'avait jamais été qu'un misérable, mais que ce procès allait faire de lui un homme célèbre et opulent." March 8, 1803. Aulard, *Paris sous le Consulat*, III, 732.

the gazettes as often as possible without seeking to buy the editors."³⁵

Throughout the period between the official exchange of ambassadors down to the final rupture between the two countries the libelous activity of the British press continued to exercise its baneful influence upon Anglo-French relations. The efforts of the French ambassador to secure some kind of restrictive measure continued, but seldom with any kind of success. "I do not cease," he wrote to Talleyrand, "to take advantage of every opportunity to direct the attention of the government and that of reasonable men to the newspapers; this road is more sure, as you have observed, to recall them to order and decency than the means of corruption."³⁶ The only concession he was able to record was that Addington, by threatening the withdrawal of the government subsidy, induced the *True Briton*, the official paper of the ministerial party, somewhat to measure its language. From Paris Whitworth had occasion to report on the frequent protests of the First Consul, made either personally or through Talleyrand. For once the ambassador was entirely aware of the significance of the question; he, for one, never brought into question Bonaparte's sincerity in the matter. Thus he writes on February 28: "If war is the result of this discussion, I shall impute it rather to the intemperance of the newspapers than to the politics of the moment." And again on March 3: "I am persuaded that if the First Consul has recourse to the desperate alternative of war it must be attributed more to the irritation kept alive by the public prints than to the question at issue."³⁷ These comments were the result of particularly vigorous protests of Talleyrand's in which the minister of the exterior had cited a whole list of outrageous

³⁵ Andréossy's report is of the 11 nivôse an XI (Jan. 1, 1803), Talleyrand's reply of the 18th (Jan. 8, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, nos. 77, 80. Fiévée himself claims to have sent three notes to the First Consul from London. Two of these, already referred to, are found in A.N., AF IV, 1672, Plaque I, fol. 63-70. The missing one may have given details of his activities here in question.

³⁶ 25 nivôse an XI (Jan. 15, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 84.

³⁷ To Hawkesbury, in Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, pp. 92, 95.

calumnies appearing currently, of which Whitworth had been compelled to admit in his reply: "This is no longer the liberty but the anarchy of the press."³⁸ To comprehend the developments of this period we cannot afford to exclude from our calculations the influence exercised on the policy of the French government by the continued excesses of the English press; on more than one occasion the temper or intractability of the First Consul can be ascribed to a particularly stinging newspaper article, rather than immoderation concerning the point under discussion.

³⁸ Talleyrand to Whitworth, 22 pluviôse an XI (Feb. 11, 1803); Whitworth to Talleyrand of same. A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, nos. 96-97.

CHAPTER VIII

THE RUPTURE

THE question of Malta did not come up for serious discussion until the end of January, 1803. It was finally touched upon by Talleyrand, who asked Whitworth for a frank declaration of what England intended to do in the matter.

He said [reports Whitworth] that another Grand Master would soon be elected, that all the powers of Europe invited to do so, with the exception of Russia, whose difficulties it would be easy to remove, and without whom the guarantee would be equally complete (as indeed I fear it would be), were ready to come forward: and that consequently the term would very soon arrive when Great Britain could have no pretext for keeping longer possession.

To this exposition the British ambassador replied that, as he had no instructions on the matter, he would have to communicate with his government, whose reply he would transmit to Talleyrand as soon as it arrived.¹ This was manifestly an evasion, and the First Consul was determined to tolerate no more of it on the question of the execution of the Treaty of Amiens. Colonel Sebastiani had just returned from his mission to the Orient. On January 30 the *Moniteur* published his report in which he dwelt upon the continued residence of the English army in Egypt, characterized their commander, General Stuart, as a man of mediocre spirit and excessive vanity, and made the pompous declaration that 7,000 French troops would suffice to reconquer the country. Even after a thorough study of all the available material on the matter it is difficult to pronounce a definite judgment on the nature and purpose of this fatal

¹ Whitworth adds: "I must do M. Talleyrand the justice to acknowledge that there was nothing in his manner that could give the smallest offence." To Hawkesbury, Jan. 27, 1803. Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 53.

report. The idea that Bonaparte then wished to goad England to war is the most difficult explanation to accept, for it would have been the worst possible time for such an adventure. His plans for a colonial empire in the West had by no means been given up; that very month had witnessed the decision to send reinforcements to Santo Domingo and the preparation of the instructions for Decaen's expedition to the East Indies. In such circumstances it would have been madness to provoke a maritime war, and the belated efforts to allay the irritation in England are an added proof that a mere challenge was not intended. In a frequently cited story from Lucien Bonaparte's *Mémoires* Sebastiani affirms that the First Consul had dictated the closing sentences of his report, declaring: "Well, we shall see whether that is not enough to drive John Bull to fight — as for me, I have no dread of war."² That the colonel was not the author of a large part of the report published as his also seemed probable from the fact that he met Whitworth at a dinner a day or two later and spoke in high terms of General Stuart.³ Yet in neither case is the evidence very conclusive. The reliability of Lucien's memoirs is open to plenty of doubt, while Sebastiani may have been only too glad to escape the responsibility for a report which he must have known would be widely condemned. It is hardly possible to make any absolute deduction from the original copy of the document as it is preserved in the Archives Nationales. Curiously enough, the general impression one gets from its perusal is that what appear to be the penciled corrections of the First Consul tended rather toward a softening in tone. Numerous remarks and notations which might have proved offensive to the British government or people are stricken out. Almost everything which hints at the preparation of the ground for future reconquest is equally omitted, especially when the personal sympathies of individual Moslem chiefs for France is touched upon. Sebastiani says that

² T. Iung, *Lucien Bonaparte et ses Mémoires 1775-1840* (1882), II, 165.

³ Whitworth to Hawkesbury, Feb. 7, 1803. Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 62.

at Cairo everybody was certain that in two years the French would be back in Syria and Egypt, and that ". . . those who know the country give much weight to the influence of such a state of mind." This is crossed out by the First Consul, who does the same with General Stuart's supposed statement that he doubted ". . . whether the English would quit Egypt and Malta until a treaty of commerce were concluded between France and England."⁴ If one were to judge solely by the appearance of this document, the inevitable conclusion would be that Sebastiani's report was essentially his own work and that the published version was not primarily intended to be either offensive or to serve as the declaration of a program of conquest.

The view that the report was intended as a warning to England if she should not fulfill her treaty engagements is based on much better ground. It is particularly supported by the tenor of a dispatch of Talleyrand to Andréossy. After remarking that the ambassador must surely have noticed the report in the *Moniteur*, and that it was probable the British government would jump at the chance to take offense, the minister went on to say:

A French officer sent to re-establish the normal trade relations between France and Egypt could not but have been astonished to see that the English army had not yet evacuated the country. Unaccustomed to politics, the officer must have looked on so manifest a violation of such a solemn treaty as a commencement of hostilities, and hence his mind would naturally turn to military calculations of the chances which war might offer; for the retention of Egypt and Malta, despite the stipulations of the Treaty of Amiens, is an act that provokes the renewal of war.⁵

Then Talleyrand launched into a long protest against the violation of the Treaty of Amiens, laying the greatest emphasis on the inability of the French government to tolerate the continued occupation of territories whose evacuation had been

⁴ 'Rapport fait au Premier Consul par le Citoyen Sebastiani (undated). A.N., AF IV, 1687.

⁵ 16 pluviôse an XI (Feb. 5, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 95.

provided for. In this sense the report was thus a warning that war was inevitable unless the treaty were carried out. The various references to the ease with which Egypt might be reconquered were probably intended to demonstrate the probable *result* of a new rupture, that is, the launching of another attack upon the Orient. In a sense the report may also have been intended as a warning to Russia, whose reluctance in accepting the guarantee of Malta provided the British with a ready excuse for postponing the evacuation of the island. Yet even these motives hardly provide sufficient explanation for an act which was far more apt to irritate than to admonish. The key to the problem lies in the ever reappearing factor of the English press outrages. Early in January an English officer, Sir Robert Wilson, had published a book upon the French Egyptian expedition, which teemed with libels against the person of the First Consul. Instead of criticizing the work in the manner it deserved, the *Times*, intimately connected with the ministry, came out with an article which not only commented upon it very favorably, but took delight in citing those passages that were the most offensive to the head of the French Republic (January 18). On the same day upon which Talleyrand had inquired of Whitworth concerning the British government's intentions on the question of Malta, he had also protested against this new outrage of the British libelists, but the ambassador had limited himself to the usual phrases regarding the sacred liberty of the press. It is probable that the publication of the report three days later was the result of this proof that nothing was to be done by diplomatic representations. That the anger of the First Consul over Wilson's book was the direct stimulus to the publication was indeed indicated by Talleyrand to Whitworth at a later date, and the minister affirms the same more positively in a dispatch to Andréossy.⁶ It would appear that Bonaparte's exasperation cooled somewhat after reflection, for Talleyrand was ordered to make a special appointment with Whitworth. In this interview it was made to appear that

⁶ 16 ventôse an XI (March 7, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 117.

Sebastiani had exceeded his instructions in entering into military speculations for which, his mission being purely of a commercial nature, he had not been authorized. It was simply the case of a young officer's being carried away by his ardor. The minister gave Whitworth his word of honor that the First Consul did not have the slightest intention of interfering in Egypt.⁷

That the publication of the Sebastiani report was an unparalleled diplomatic blunder soon became evident. The reaction in London and throughout England was electrical. "The town is ringing with M. Sebastiani's report on Egypt," wrote Lord Minto to his wife. "It seems to make a strong impression everywhere — as if nobody suspected that Bonaparte had views on that part of the world before."⁸ Persons who had been indifferent to the expansion of the French colonial empire in the West, or even to the lack of a commercial understanding, now came forward with demands for a strong policy. It was in vain that Andréossy went about expressing his surprise that any concern should be felt at a mere "coup de tête," which, he was sure, had long been repented of. How could one, he protested, attribute such extensive and dangerous designs to the First Consul and attach so much importance to Malta, when France was in a situation absolutely unfit for war, to which her people were unalterably opposed?⁹ But no one listened to him. The English, as he wrote plaintively to Talleyrand, insisted upon regarding everything that appeared in the *Moniteur* as absolutely official.¹⁰ On the Continent the reaction was equally unfavorable. At St. Petersburg the fact that the English were still in Egypt excited less apprehension than the prospect of another French adventure. In Constantinople Brune was soon made aware of the irritation and anxiety which the publication of the report had aroused. "What! Sebastiani

⁷ Whitworth to Hawkesbury, Feb. 7, 1803. Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 62.

⁸ Feb. 5, 1803. *Life and Letters of the Earl of Minto*, III, 270.

⁹ Malmesbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 221.

¹⁰ 19 pluviôse an XI (Feb. 8, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 96.

whom we treated so well!" cried the Reis-effendi. The Austrian, Russian, and Neapolitan ambassadors eagerly took advantage of this state of mind to turn the Porte against France.¹¹ Everywhere the Republic lost ground in consequence of this ill-advised act.

The British cabinet seized upon it without a moment's hesitation, and, as time proved, made a great deal of capital out of it. On February 9 Whitworth was instructed to declare, ". . . it will be impossible for His Majesty to enter into any further discussion relative to Malta unless he receives a satisfactory explanation on the subject of the communication."¹² Whitworth, on his own initiative, told Talleyrand that the English government was just preparing instructions for him to declare that Malta was about to be evacuated, when Sebastiani's report made such a procedure impossible. Talleyrand asked what kind of satisfaction was demanded, but again the British ambassador "had no instructions on the point."¹³

On February 18 the First Consul summoned Whitworth to the Tuileries and spoke to him for over two hours. He frankly admitted his conviction that in the course of historical evolution Egypt would some day be united to France, but he flatly denied that he had any designs upon her. War would be the inevitable consequence if England refused to evacuate Malta, but it would be a very foolish and useless struggle. France would not be able to meet the British fleet for another ten years, while Britain would no longer find allies on the Continent: the Emperor of Russia was pacifically inclined, while Austria no longer counted.¹⁴ This strong language was reinforced by the famous "Exposé de la Situation de la République," which was presented to the legislative bodies on February 20. After painting the position of France in favorable colors and

¹¹ Brune to Talleyrand, 5 germinal an XI (March 26, 1803). A.E., TURQUIE, 206, no. 26.

¹² Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 97.

¹³ Whitworth to Hawkesbury, Feb. 17, 1803. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹⁴ Whitworth to Hawkesbury, Feb. 21, 1803. *Ibid.*, p. 78. Talleyrand to Andréossy, 30 pluviôse an XI (Feb. 19, 1802). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 105.

discussing the relations with the various powers, this report concluded with the celebrated words: "Whatever may be at London the success of intrigue, it will not entice other peoples into new leagues; and the Government says with just pride: alone, England cannot today oppose France."¹⁵ The First Consul had evidently come to regret his "weakness" in attempting to blunt the edge of the Sebastiani report and decided to take a firm stand. Andréossy was instructed to demand in a most positive manner the evacuation of Malta, the expulsion of Cadoudal and his adherents from British territory, the suppression of the French journals at London, and a warning to the English papers against spreading tales about the First Consul which outraged public decency.

The First Consul has again reflected on the conversation which he has had with Lord Whitworth [wrote Talleyrand], and he anticipates that the expressions which he will be forced to make use of in the statement on the situation of the Republic will be very painful to the British government. He does not regret its impression in London. This epoch must be decisive. This state of mixed uncertainty which leaves all commercial interests in suspense, all spirits in inquietude, must cease.¹⁶

Matters were, in fact, fast approaching a crisis. A factor of the greatest importance in stiffening the backs of the British was the rapidly changing attitude of Russia. The court of St. Petersburg had long been discontented with the increase of French power on the Continent. As early as February, 1802, a dispatch sent to Markov recalled that ". . . when France incorporated the Netherlands and gave herself the Rhine and the Alps as frontiers, her government designated these as a compensation for what others had taken in Poland. These acquisitions already surpass those which we made then."¹⁷

What particularly irritated Alexander was the realization that

¹⁵ *Corr.*, VIII, no. 6591.

¹⁶ 30 pluviôse an XI (Feb. 19, 1803). *A E.*, ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 106.

¹⁷ Jan. 29-Feb. 10, 1802. *Sbornik, imperatorskago russkago istoriceskago obscestva*, LXX, 332.

he had been completely outwitted in the question of the German indemnities, in which his assistance had so materially contributed to the establishment of French influence in South Germany. The Consulate for life had also offended the sentimental autocrat, who wrote to Laharpe that Bonaparte had deprived himself of the greatest fame a mortal could have, that of having worked disinterestedly for his country — from now on the Corsican would be one of the greatest tyrants history had known.¹⁸ Russia therefore turned more and more to England, in whose interest she was really acting in refusing to accept the guarantee of Malta. In fact, before the end of the year Chancellor Woronzov and Czartoryski were hinting to the British ambassador that the Tsar would be pleased to see the British remain in the island. In November the former had written to his brother of the London embassy: "The interests of Russia and those of England have so many points in common between them that the two powers can consider themselves as allies without having any need of writing it on paper."¹⁹ This shows how wrong the First Consul was when he loudly declared that the English no longer had any allies on the Continent.²⁰ He could not as yet bring himself to believe that the entente with Russia, upon which he had placed so high a value, was a thing of the past. So he continued his tentatives for an understanding on eastern affairs, not realizing that with each new proposition he was driving Russia further into the arms of the British, who were only too ready to feed her suspicions concerning French ambitions in the Orient.²¹

At London Andréossy made despairing efforts to arrive at a

¹⁸ Tatistcheff, *Alexandre Ier et Napoléon*, p. 43.

¹⁹ F. Martens, *Recueil des traités . . . conclus par la Russie*, XI, 68.

²⁰ The publicity given these remarks greatly offended the English ministers. "*On peut le penser, mais non pas le dire*," Hawkesbury observed with chagrin to the French ambassador. Report of the 6 pluviôse an XI (Jan. 26, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 91.

²¹ Thus Whitworth, after his interview with the First Consul, quite falsely assured Markov that the latter had declared his intention of taking possession of Egypt in the near future, even at the risk of war. Markov to the Tsar, March 14, 1803. *Sbornik*, LXXVII, 63.

modus vivendi on the score of questions which divided the two governments. The strongest instrument for conciliation provided in his original instructions had been the authority to negotiate for commercial arrangements by which the interests of French industry were sufficiently protected. Because of the intense irritation of the French government at the reluctance of the Addington ministry to make any concessions on the chief subjects of complaint, it had since been decided that nothing would be done in this connection until a better general understanding had been reached. "Every time that anyone speaks to you of commerce," wrote Talleyrand, "reply that we cannot listen to any proposition in regard to renewing the commercial bonds as long as England will not make clear that she really wishes to come out of this state of truce in order to enter one of true peace." As long as émigré intrigues were allowed to go on without interference, libels spread broadcast, and the Bourbons permitted to flaunt their orders, the situation could hardly be characterized as more than an armistice. As for the commercial agents which France had sent to England, if the British government should continue to refuse to recognize them, it would become evident to all the world that Britain was responsible for the failure of the efforts to arrive at a reasonable commercial arrangement, one which could be reached only after each party had informed itself fully of the factors involved.²²

The British government made exactly opposite demands, refusing to recognize the commercial agents until after a settlement had been arrived at. Hawkesbury pleaded with Andréossy for the admission of British goods into France, no matter how high a duty were placed upon articles in which competition was feared. This appeal was backed in a memorandum by Coquebert-Montbret, the principal French commissioner, and, rather more timidly, by Andréossy himself. But Bonaparte felt that it would be impolitic to yield until his various complaints had been satisfied.

²² 11 frimaire an XI (Dec. 2, 1802). A.E., ANGLETERRE, supplément 30, nos. 242-243; 600, no. 53.

What Andréossy feared most of all was the overthrow of the ministry, in the pacific dispositions of which he had the utmost confidence.

Lord Hawkesbury and Mr. Addington [he had written the previous December] are in the best of dispositions; their existence is attached to the conservation of peace. . . . All these ministers need to maintain themselves is to see England treated with a little consideration in her foreign relations. . . . If he [Addington] does not find a support in the condescendence of the French government, the greater number of his friends will have deserted him by January 1.²³

It is indeed doubtful whether Andréossy, in his frantic effort to reconcile the two countries, did not really prevent an understanding. His continued representations as to the pacific inclinations of the Addington ministry may have done much to confirm the First Consul in his determination to gain his way by threats and demonstrations, while the diluted form in which he presented the demands of his government must have encouraged the British in rejecting them.²⁴ Bonaparte was given the impression that in England two definitely opposed parties, the one pacific, the other bellicose, stood arrayed against each other, when, as a matter of fact, his threats operated as a bond of union between the various political factions. Addington, at the very time when Andréossy was describing him as resisting the pressure of the war party with all his might, was making a bid for the political support of this group. On February 19 he had an interview with Malmsbury, one of the most irreconcilable Jacobin-haters, in which he claimed to have foreseen from the first that France would again force England to war, though he had determined to wait until the Republic ". . . had filled the measure of her folly and put herself completely in the wrong."

²³ 7 frimaire an XI (Nov. 28, 1802). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 52.

²⁴ "Lord Hawkesbury observed that Andréossi was a very good man to have here; that his disposition was to accommodate, and be quiet; and that he (Hawkesbury) knew he did not obey his strange instructions farther than he was obliged to do" Feb. 16, 1803. Malmsbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 207. About the same time Whitworth reported that the First Consul was dissatisfied with the conduct of his ambassador. To Hawkesbury, Feb. 21, 1803. Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 83.

He had merely waited ". . . until insolence was coupled with hostility, before he moved. This was done in the most unquestionable way by Sebastiani's report; and, if Bonaparte had studied how to fulfill his [Addington's] predictions, he could not have accomplished it better."²⁵

While the ministry was thus drawing near to the war party, the Whigs, on their part, cooled in their opposition to forceful measures. "It is feared that the government has views on Egypt and India," wrote Andréossy, "and this apprehension exists with those members of the opposition who are most pronounced for peace."²⁶ At a dinner where the ambassador met Sheridan and the Prince of Wales, both these gentlemen, the bottle having passed quite freely, expressed themselves with utmost frankness on the basic differences between France and Great Britain. Sheridan contended that France ought not to have the left bank of the Rhine and Belgium, for it gave her too strong a position for an attack upon England.

If Bonaparte were an ordinary man [declared the Prince], he would not excite our fears and our jealousy, but with a man of such great talents and such genius we cannot rest secure with an ordinary armament. Under the monarchy it was the nation which gave the tone to the government; but today it is the First Consul who gives activity and movement to his country.

He desired peace and had urged that it be made, said George, but if England had to buy it by dishonorable sacrifices, he would be the first to incite to war.²⁷

On February 22 Talleyrand had ordered Andréossy to submit a note to the British government setting out the French point of view and demanding an official explanation of the non-evacuation of Malta. This dispatch arrived very late at London, so that the ambassador had already had occasion to discuss the question with the ministers. Curiously enough, he seemed

²⁵ Malmesbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 213.

²⁶ Andréossy to the First Consul, 6 pluviôse an XI (Jan. 26, 1803). A.N., AF IV, 1672, Plaque I, fol. 102-103.

²⁷ Andréossy to the First Consul, 11 nivôse an XI (Jan. 1, 1803). *Ibid.*, Plaque I, fol. 130-131.

to approve entirely of the Exposé, which he did not expect would cause much stir in London and whose expressions he found "sufficiently moderate." On February 26 he had a long conference with Addington, who seemed quite put out about everything and claimed that every week or two France was making some new advance. The next day Andréossy saw Hawkesbury, who now came out very plainly with the contention that Britain had a right to Malta as a compensation for French aggrandizement on the Continent.²⁸ It was the same stand expressed to Otto four months before, when the Secretary of State had replied to the envoy's "the whole Treaty of Amiens and nothing but the Treaty" with: "The state of the Continent as it was then and nothing but that state."²⁹

On March 8 came the reply to the threats of the First Consul which the British public had anxiously been awaiting. George III appeared before the Houses of Parliament and read his famous "Speech from the Throne," the tenor of which can be sufficiently judged from the first line: "His Majesty thinks it necessary to acquaint the House of Commons that as very considerable military preparations are carrying on in the ports of France and Holland, he has judged it expedient to adopt additional measures of precaution for the security of his dominions."³⁰ It was recommended that the militia be called out and a levy of 10,000 additional men for the navy be ordered. These measures were actually adopted by Parliament on the 11th, and that same night press gangs were scouring the streets and inns of London for sailors. Andréossy had been called in by Hawkesbury and given a copy of the speech a few hours before it was delivered. The minister spoke of the measures about to be

²⁸ Andréossy's report of the 10 ventôse an XI (March 1, 1803). A.E., ANGLE-TERRE, 600, no. 112.

²⁹ Otto to Talleyrand, 7 brumaire an XI (Oct. 29, 1802). Talleyrand had replied: "Nous avons alors [at the time of the signature of the Treaty of Amiens] 10,000 hommes en Suisse, 30,000 en Piémont et près de quarante mille dans les états qui composent la République italienne. Comment le Gouvernement britannique peut-il donc se plaindre de ce qui existe aujourd'hui?" 24 brumaire an XI (Nov. 15, 1802). *Ibid.*, 600, nos. 26, 34.

³⁰ Copy in *ibid.*, 600, no. 119.

taken as merely "precautionary," and the optimistic ambassador characterized them as "tactics" to warn France and quiet the native jingoists.⁸¹

The arguments of contemporaries and certain historians that this action was on a par with the Consular Exposé is unconvincing. While the First Consul had played with indirect threats, England here made a move which, according to diplomatic usage, was a preliminary step to war, basing it on a statement which was soon shown to be entirely false. As late as March 17 Whitworth repeats a declaration of previous reports: "I can say with absolute certainty that no armaments of any consequence are carrying on in the French ports."⁸² It is said that the ministry relied on false information received by Lord St. Vincent, the First Lord of the Admiralty. In any case, the palpable untruth of the declaration upon which her armaments were based placed England in a very bad light.

When the news of the royal message reached Paris, Whitworth hurried to Talleyrand, finding him in the greatest perturbation. He tried his best to explain that no menace or threat was intended, that it was only a precaution against the armaments in the Dutch ports. Talleyrand replied that everyone knew the expedition preparing in Holland was being fitted out for America.⁸³ The First Consul was of course beside himself with rage, his first step being to notify Whitworth through Talleyrand that France would be forced to arm in turn, that her army would be placed on a war footing, all Holland reoccupied, and a camp formed on the frontier of Hanover.⁸⁴ He immediately wrote to the Tsar and the King of Prussia, arguing the case between himself and England and appealing to the former to offer his mediation.⁸⁵ "I have just written to Madrid, to Vienna, to Regensburg, to Berlin, and to St. Petersburg," reads a dispatch of Talleyrand's to Andréossy, "and everywhere I

⁸¹ Andréossy's report of the 17 ventôse (March 8, 1803). *Ibid.*, 600, no. 118.

⁸² To Hawkesbury. Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 115.

⁸³ Whitworth to Hawkesbury, March 12, 1803. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

⁸⁴ To Hawkesbury, March 17, 1803. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

⁸⁵ March 11, 1803. *Corr.*, VIII, nos. 6625, 6626.

have made known the suspense which the message of His Britannic Majesty and the measures accompanying it have caused here." ⁸⁶

On March 13 occurred the famous scene in the Tuileries in which Bonaparte, contrary to all rules of diplomatic courtesy, made a violent verbal attack upon the British ambassador. This affair has so often been misrepresented that many of the best works are in error concerning it. Some picture the First Consul as addressing a rude and continuous harangue to the envoy; others have gone so far as to declare that he made as if to strike him. The ambassador's own account ought to be trustworthy enough to be given credence. In his dispatch of March 14 he writes:

I was yesterday a witness, and to some degree a sufferer from the violence of his temper. He asked me whether I had any news from England. I replied in the negative. "So you are determined to go to war?" "No, Premier Consul, we are too sensible to the advantages of peace." "We have already fought for fifteen years." "That is already too long." "But you wish to fight for fifteen years more. You are forcing me to it." "That is far from His Majesty's intentions." He then proceeded to Markov and Azara who were standing near and said: "The English want war, but if they are the first to draw the sword I will be the last to sheath it." [Bonaparte proceeds around the room in great excitement; then returns to Whitworth.] He then resumed the conversation with something personally civil to me, but soon continued as before: "Why these armaments? Against whom these measures of precaution? I have not a ship of the line in the ports of France, but if you wish to arm, I will follow suit; if you wish to fight, I will fight too. France can be destroyed but never intimidated." "We do not wish to do one or the other." "Then you must respect treaties; bad luck to those who do not keep their treaties. One is responsible for them to all of Europe." He then retired in great agitation.⁸⁷

Whitworth seems to have been convinced that this brusquerie was due entirely to a loss of temper, and rightly judges that Bonaparte was soon ashamed of it. This opinion is borne out

⁸⁶ 21 ventôse an XI (March 12, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 128.

⁸⁷ Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 116.

by a dispatch sent off to Andréossy that same evening at the express orders of the First Consul. Talleyrand betrays his anxiety that the news of this scene will create a serious impression in England. He therefore informs the ambassador in detail of what has been said, so that he will be able to refute any misrepresentations of the affair by Whitworth, whom he suspected, in this case unjustly, of coloring his reports. "Your language must be moderate but firm. We have not yet provoked war. . . . The First Consul has not communicated anything to the nation, and has not taken any military measures." Two days later a similar account was sent to General Hédouville, the envoy at St. Petersburg. In each case the "conversation" is of course presented in a much more favorable light than in the description of Whitworth.³⁸ It was now well understood that matters had been made worse, that temper had again been at fault, and that the effect must be modified at all costs.³⁹ Talleyrand was ready with a sort of half-apology when Whitworth complained of the treatment accorded him, and at the next public audience no lack of courtesy was shown the ambassador.

This was, in fact, the last occasion upon which the First Consul's amateurish precipitation aggravated the relations between France and England; from now on his conduct never ceased to be conciliatory. On March 17 Whitworth writes: "It is certain that the First Consul has no desire to go to war. He feels that he has nothing to gain from us, and that the whole country is against it." At the same time he became more strongly convinced than ever that Bonaparte was perfectly sincere in feeling that his honor demanded him to hold England to the letter of the treaty.⁴⁰

³⁸ *Corr.*, VIII, nos. 6630, 6636. A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 128.

³⁹ According to the account given by Hortense Beauharnais, the First Consul, on returning to his cabinet, was met by the reproaches of Joseph Bonaparte: "Tu a fait trembler tout le monde; on te croira méchant." To which in a singularly chastened mood he replied: "C'est vrai, j'ai eu tort. Je ne voulais pas descendre aujourd'hui. Talleyrand m'a dit des choses qui m'ont donné de l'humeur, et ce grand flandrin d'ambassadeur est venu se mettre devant mon nez." *Mémoires de la Reine Hortense* (1931), I, 147.

⁴⁰ To Hawkesbury. Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 128.

On March 15 Andréossy finally received the long-awaited reply on the question of Malta. After reviewing his former position, especially on the right of England to demand compensation because of the "spirit" of the Treaty of Amiens, Hawkesbury maintained that England would still have generously evacuated Malta if the menacing attitude of France toward the Ottoman Empire, as typified in the Sebastiani report, did not require new guarantees.⁴¹

How anxious the First Consul had now become to repair the tottering edifice of peace is shown by the note which he personally dictated in reply. The British accusations were seriously analyzed and refuted, especially the charge of armaments in the Dutch ports, in which there had been but two frigates at the time of the royal message. It was denied that France had made any aggrandizement on the Continent, and the Sebastiani report was explained away with the arguments previously used. The intentions of the government of the Republic were absolutely pacific, and not a single soldier had so far been armed: "There thus exists but one object which is worthy of fixing the attention of the two nations, the non-execution of the Treaty of Amiens as far as it concerns Malta."⁴² No one was more firmly convinced of the pacific nature of this overture than the British ambassador himself, whose comment is well worth recording:

From the tenor of this note your Lordship will be convinced that this Government is not desirous to proceed to extremities, that is to say, it is not prepared to do so; . . . the First Consul declares that he would be willing to enter into any engagement by which a security for the safety of Egypt might be given. On the subject of Malta he cannot listen to any compromises, since he is bound in honor to require the full execution of the Treaty of Amiens. . . . I declared to him [Talleyrand] that I saw no means of coming to an understanding, unless Malta was conceded to us, if not in perpetuity, at least for a term of years.⁴³

⁴¹ Hawkesbury to Andréossy. A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 134.

⁴² The note, originally dictated by Bonaparte and then corrected in his own hand, is in A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 139.

⁴³ Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 129.

At London Andréossy was continuing his desperate efforts for the maintenance of peace. He implored the ministers that under no circumstances should the fleets be permitted to leave port: "I have brought Lord Hawkesbury to perceive that if the squadrons are once at sea the ministers are no longer the masters." At the same time he recommended to his own government that it avoid any ostentatious armament in order to give no new strength to the British war party.⁴⁴ In dispatch after dispatch he insisted that the British government would do all it could to keep the peace: "Neither the King, nor the government, nor the nation wish war. The question is how to escape in a manner honorable to both governments from the position in which the English ministry has placed itself."⁴⁵ So anxious was the ambassador to avoid a rupture, that he wrote to the First Consul personally:

I am persuaded that you desire peace, that you have need of it, and I act in consequence; but you do not allow the ministers any means to get out of the mess into which they have blundered; and then, whatever may be the turn of events, they will resort to war. The wishes, the desire, the needs of this country are for peace.⁴⁶

On April 3 Hawkesbury presented his reply to the French minister. France, said he, requested England to evacuate Malta without offering the explanations which had been demanded. The state of suspense was becoming unbearable; France should make known her decision. As a suitable arrangement the following points were proposed:

- 1) England receives Malta.
- 2) France evacuates Holland and Switzerland.
- 3) England recognizes the kingdom of Etruria; Elba is recognized as a part of France.

⁴⁴ To Talleyrand, 26 ventôse an XI (March 18, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, nos. 136, 137.

⁴⁵ To Talleyrand, 7 and 8 germinal an XI (March 28 and 29, 1803). *Ibid.*, 600, nos. 149, 150.

⁴⁶ 12 germinal an XI (April 2, 1803). A.N., AF IV, 1672, Plaque I, fol. 140-141.

- 4) The Italian and Ligurian Republics are recognized, providing the King of Sardinia is indemnified in Italy.
- 5) England is given satisfaction for the Sebastiani report.⁴⁷

This note was correctly characterized by Andréossy as an ultimatum — either the desired explanations would have to be given or Whitworth was sure to be recalled. "Its present position forces this move upon the British ministry; it can no longer hold the people, commerce, and navigation in the uncertainty in which they find themselves." In his panic at the thought of approaching war the ambassador was rapidly losing his head. Everything, according to him, was up to the French government, which would have to find some way to satisfy the British government. And, in spite of the new demands, which further complicated an already delicate situation, Andréossy continued to maintain that the Addington ministry had nothing more at heart than the maintenance of peace.⁴⁸

The First Consul, possibly influenced by these continued representations, showed his complete readiness to give any kind of guarantee regarding his intentions on Egypt which did not involve the acquisition of Malta by England. France was in the worst possible position for a new war, particularly one at sea. The First Consul himself had spoken of ten years as the shortest possible period in which France could expect to compete with the British navy, and everything which had been done up to February of 1803 to build up the French marine he designated as a mere apprenticeship.⁴⁹ On his request, the Minister of Marine and Colonies, Decrès, had presented a report on April 1 concerning the prospects for the near future. According to his estimate, the very maximum for which France could hope by the end of the year XII (September, 1804) was fifty-six sail of the line and fifty-four frigates. One need only compare this

⁴⁷ Hawkesbury to Andréossy, Apr. 3; Whitworth to Talleyrand, Apr. 7, A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, nos. 158, 163. Also Hawkesbury to Whitworth, Apr. 4, in Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 151.

⁴⁸ Andréossy to Talleyrand, 14 germinal an XI (Apr. 4, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 157.

⁴⁹ *Corr.*, VII, no. 5968; VIII, no. 6583.

with the two hundred odd ships of each of these classes which the British navy could boast at the time of the peace of Amiens. Decrès also gave a gloomy picture of the condition of the French navy yards and a large number of the vessels which he had included in his list.⁵⁰ As for the land forces of the Republic, they were similarly defective in equipment and personnel. The cavalry sadly lacked horses, many men were on leave, and the artillery was next to useless for the moment because of a general refounding of cannon.

The negotiations at Paris were now confided by the First Consul to Talleyrand and his brother Joseph. His own relations with Whitworth were no longer on a sufficiently cordial basis, while Joseph was the self-heralded chief of the peace party. Regarding the proposals in the British note of April 3, the French government was willing to offer the substantial concession of the practical recognition of the right of compensation. But Malta, on the evacuation of which France felt herself in honor bound to insist, could not be considered in this light. Instead, Joseph Bonaparte suggested Corfu or Crete, which would serve equally well as a base from which to defend an attack upon Egypt.⁵¹ Andréossy was authorized to inform Hawkesbury that France was ready to go to the point of a formal convention to reassure England on her fears of such projects: "Thus the door is open to reasonable explanations."⁵² The ambassador welcomed the dispatch as a veritable answer to his prayers.

I am persuaded [he exulted] that its contents will be received with eagerness by the ministers of His Britannic Majesty, for they will find themselves in a position to reply with emphasis to their adversaries, who expect to launch a lively attack upon them after the reconvening of the two chambers.

⁵⁰ Report on "Vaisseaux et Frégates qui seront probablement disponible au commencement de l'an XIII," 10 germinal an XI (April 1, 1803). A.N., AF IV, 1190.

⁵¹ Whitworth to Hawkesbury, April 9, 1803. Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 162.

⁵² Talleyrand, 19 germinal an XI (April 9, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 165.

Someone had told Andréossy that the ministers would be only too glad to put themselves in a position in which they would be obliged to give up Malta without loss of dignity.⁵³

If the British government had still cared to preserve peace this would indeed have been its opportunity to do so with honor. But the reply to the overtures of which Andréossy had expected so much was another ultimatum repeating in essence what had been demanded before. The only concession offered was that the English might occupy the fortifications of Malta, while handing over the civil administration of the island to the Knights of St. John. Another alternative would be to hold Malta for ten years and then take Lampedusa, for which the King of Naples would be compensated. Yet even the cession of the French on the question of Malta would no longer be sufficient, for the other demands, regarding Italy, Holland, and Switzerland, were given equal weight. It is evident that Britain was making a last-moment attempt to appear as the protector of the European equilibrium. Whitworth, who presented these proposals verbally to Talleyrand, spoke of them very frankly as an "ultimatum" and announced his departure from Paris if no convention had been signed within seven days. He refused to put his demands on paper, even unsigned. "Here we have, without doubt," declared Talleyrand, "the first verbal ultimatum of which the history of modern negotiations has any record, and when one thinks in what circumstances this procedure is employed, it is difficult to repulse the painful idea that the British government is planning to bring about a rupture."⁵⁴ The minister of the exterior could well be aghast. After having commenced by asking only for explanations on the supposed French views upon Egypt, and after being shown the First Consul's readiness to give any kind of guarantee desired, even to the extent of a formal conven-

⁵³ 24 germinal an XI (April 14, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 167.

⁵⁴ Talleyrand to Andréossy, 9 floréal an XI (April 29, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600 no. 170. Hawkesbury's instructions to Whitworth of April 23 regarding the ultimatum are given by Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 182.

tion and the admission of an unfounded right of compensation, the British government now came forward and, in the form of an ultimatum, presented demands involving a number of points which had not had any part in the discussion.

Small wonder that Bonaparte found it difficult to reply to such a challenge. The seven days stipulated by Whitworth passed, and the ambassador asked for his passports. Talleyrand now pointed out that France could make no stipulation regarding Lampedusa, which did not belong to her. The implication was of course that the Republic ceded on this question by allowing England to make her own bargain with Naples. As regarded Malta, the First Consul for the first time receded from his position of absolute opposition to English possession, but here it would be necessary to consult the other contracting parties, Holland and Spain, as well as the guaranteeing powers. The First Consul did not refuse to act in concert with England in this matter, but it was patently not up to him to take the lead when it was England which desired a change. To these suggestions Whitworth, who knew that the principal object of the French government now was to gain time, replied that he had no authority to treat on the basis suggested and thus could not feel justified in retarding his departure. But Bonaparte had not yet reached the limit of concession. The English were in Malta, he said, and if France made no further demand for their withdrawal there was nothing to hinder their staying there. A convention might be signed, giving the island into the care of one of the three guaranteeing powers, Russia, Prussia, or Austria, but nobody would expect the British to evacuate for at least three or four years.

These offers appeared so advantageous to Whitworth, that he decided to risk reprimand and wait for the decision of his government. To Hawkesbury he described the plan as ". . . a proposal of a nature to admit of an honorable and advantageous adjustment of the present differences."⁵⁵ Talleyrand also wrote

⁵⁵ Whitworth to Talleyrand, Talleyrand to Whitworth, May 2; Whitworth to Talleyrand, Talleyrand to Andréossy, May 3. A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, nos.

to Andréossy, informing him of the consent of Whitworth to accept the note ad referendum, and instructing him to neglect no way of persuading the British ministry to consider a reasonable arrangement. In his own hand he added the postscript: "We will never consent to a formal stipulation providing for a single day's occupation of Malta by the English, but we will not make any difficulties about the occupation de fait, to last until the arrival of the troops, which will probably be Russian — and the term will be a very extended one."⁵⁶

That the British government had finally decided on war is nowhere shown more definitely than at this juncture. The continued conferences of Andréossy with the Secretary of State during the past week had been without any result. "I saw clearly from some words which escaped him," wrote the finally disillusioned envoy, "that the ministry, and he particularly, have made their bargain with the party of Grenville."⁵⁷ With the energetic assistance of Schimmelpenninck, the Dutch minister at London, Andréossy urged the advantages of the French offers upon the ministry.⁵⁸ After consulting the Council, Hawkesbury sent a final draft convention to Whitworth, though the ambassador was reproved for his delay as a result of propositions which were characterized as "loose, indefinite, and unsatisfactory." The only concession offered was that the article by which Malta was not to be evacuated for ten years could be kept secret. The suggestion that the island be placed under the guardianship of one of the guaranteeing powers was rejected, on the plea that Russia, the only state fitted for this rôle, was certain to decline it.⁵⁹

173-176. Whitworth to Hawkesbury, May 4. Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 218. The French note is also in *Corr.*, VIII, no. 6725.

⁵⁶ 14 floréal an XI (May 3, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 180.

⁵⁷ 15 floréal an XI (May 4, 1803). *Ibid.*, 600, no. 182.

⁵⁸ Andréossy to Talleyrand, 17 floréal an XI (May 6, 1803). *Ibid.*, 600, no. 188. The British had for some time taken advantage of the concert between Andréossy and Schimmelpenninck by intercepting the latter's correspondence. Thus Lord Malmsbury notes on March 26: "It appears from the interception of Schimmelpenninck's letters, that Andréossy has not received anything positive from Bonaparte." Malmsbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 247.

⁵⁹ Hawkesbury to Whitworth, May 7, 1803. Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 224. Whitworth's note and project of convention, May 10. A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, nos. 191, 192.

To Whitworth's note Talleyrand replied with the observation that the assertion that Russia would refuse to take Malta "en dépôt" was inconsistent with information just received from St. Petersburg. In fact, a courier had arrived for Markoy, bringing a rescript of the Tsar's of April 23. Alexander expressed his deep distress that the dispute between France and England had reached such an acute stage, and his gratification at being called upon (in the First Consul's appeal of March 11) to assist the two countries to arrive at an understanding. Malta was a rock of little importance. The best way for the two parties to clear up their differences was to state frankly their reason for discontent; if for this they desired the services of an intermediary, Alexander would do what he could to help them.⁶⁰ So Talleyrand was able to surprise Whitworth with the Russian proffer of mediation, expressing the hope that the British cabinet would send new instructions. The ambassador replied that he would be glad to remit the French note to his government, but he was bound by his orders to leave Paris immediately. When Talleyrand still delayed, he repeated his request for his passports, which were at length accorded him.⁶¹

On the evening of May 12 Whitworth left Paris. After him was sent a final offer of Malta for ten years if the French could occupy Otranto and Tarentum in the Kingdom of Naples for a like period.⁶² The same proposition was transmitted to Andréossy, who was to employ Schimmelpenninck or some other indirect voice to make it known to Addington. The envoy was given authority to conclude a convention on these terms, but care was to be taken that no trace of the overture be left if there was no chance of acceptance, ". . . so that one could always deny that the French government would have acquiesced in such a proposition."⁶³ Schimmelpenninck did convey this to

⁶⁰ Rescript de S. M. l'Empereur de toutes les Russies au Comte de Marcoff, le 10 avril 1803. A.E., RUSSIE, 142, no. 98; ANGLETERRE, supplément 30, fol. 52-55.

⁶¹ May 12, 1803. A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, nos. 195-198.

⁶² Whitworth to Hawkesbury, May 14, 1803. Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 242; *Corr.*, VIII, no. 6740.

⁶³ 23 floréal an XI (May 13, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 203.

the ministers, receiving the reply that Britain's obligations to the King of Naples prevented such an arrangement. Nothing remained for Andréossy but to demand his passports in his turn. At Dover he encountered Whitworth returning from Paris, who assured him that he would do all he could to influence his government in the interest of conciliation.⁶⁴ But the die was cast — before the staff of the British embassy had left France, the war had already begun on the high seas.

The epoch-making struggle which was to end only with the fall of the Empire was thus resumed. It was to prove the decisive factor in the career of Napoleon as well as in the history of modern France. Because of it the Napoleonic Empire became and remained a military institution, forever organized and ready to resist one coalition after another. It has often been a subject of dispute just how far Napoleon regarded England as the central point in his political system and regulated his continental policy by his relations with her. England certainly saw all the powers in the light of pawns to be used against France; in how far was this attitude reciprocated? The answer provides the solution for the problem as to why Britain forced France again to take up arms after barely a year of peace. In times of peace England had no ready means of pressure upon France in continental affairs, for the Republic of 1801 was too strong to be restrained by the usual means of diplomacy. Thus the First Consul could afford to ignore Great Britain entirely after the signature of the preliminary peace — her recognition of changes in Germany and Italy was hardly worth the trouble of demanding. The situation in war was entirely different, for all the continental powers were potential members of a coalition, and France had to regard them in this light. Moreover, the superiority of the British at sea would, in the long run, result in a situation intolerable to the French people, so that the government would be driven to desperate measures to put an end to the struggle. This was very well appreciated by Bonaparte, who had

⁶⁴ Andréossy to Talleyrand, Paris, 30 floréal an XI (May 20, 1803). *Ibid*, 600, no. 211.

been making almost frantic efforts during the last month of negotiation to avoid a rupture. Yet no one was convinced more than he of the inevitable and fatalistic conflict between the two countries. He has been criticized for refusing to make a peace which provided a solid basis for future amity and coöperation, but who can say that this was possible? France as she was then — dominant in Western Europe, secure in her so-called natural boundaries, threatening England from Belgium, reviving her colonial empire — was straining every sacred principle of British policy. The lordship on land has never been able to live in peace with the lordship of the sea. The Germans of that day, with characteristic philosophical preoccupation, insisted on comparing the two nations to the Romans and the Carthaginians. Thus Archchancellor Dalberg expressed himself to the French agent Baudus:

With pretensions like those of England and of France, exalted in the two peoples by the constant successes of the last war, only a short truce can exist between them, especially if one or the other finds herself governed by a chief who adds to the pretensions and the force of the nation, a great force and great pretensions of his own.⁶⁵

"The real cause of the rupture," says J. H. Rose, "was an essential divergence of view on Oriental policy, in which the future of India, Egypt, and Malta stood in vital relation."⁶⁶ One cannot deny that the British apprehensions concerning the French views in the Near East were a powerful factor in uniting the country behind the government, and even serious-minded Englishmen took the Sebastiani report to be the declaration of a whole future program. The attitude of Pitt and his followers finds expression in a conversation between him and George Rose at Walmer in February of 1803. The latter notes in his diary:

We agreed that the possession of that country [Egypt] must, in one way or another, completely take from us the advantages we at present derive from our possessions in and trade to the East Indies.

⁶⁵ Baudus to Talleyrand, Ratisbon (Regensburg), 13 germinal an XI (April 13, 1803) A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 705, no. 164.

⁶⁶ *Napoleon's Last Voyages* (1906), p. 51 n.

The faculty it would give France to invade India . . . cannot be questioned. With the spirit of enterprise so strongly manifested in the French lately, they would be very likely to attempt a large and navigable cut from the Red Sea to the Nile, in which attempt, if they should succeed, they would effectually bring the trade of India to Marseilles and other ports in the Mediterranean, by carrying the commodities of that country through Egypt, for probably about one half the expense of our freight by the Cape of Good Hope.⁶⁷

These considerations undoubtedly affected the views of many Englishmen and found ample reflection in the policy of the government against France, but they were not the vital motives in the Addington ministry's decision to bring about a rupture. For in order to avoid the conflict, the First Consul had shown his willingness to give guarantees that would have bound his hands effectively as to future aggressions in the East, a fact which Whitworth, for example, fully appreciated. It can be similarly demonstrated that Britain did not go to war to protect the Continent. This might have been the case in October or November, when, for a moment, public pressure had induced the ministry to take a stand which would have resulted in war if the First Consul had not acted so rapidly in the occupation of Switzerland. After that his expansive activity on the Continent had ceased, where, indeed, further "conquests in peace" were scarcely feasible. At the time of the rupture the colonial expansion of France was also no longer a cause of much apprehension to the British, for the affairs of Santo Domingo were in the worst state possible, while Louisiana had already been sold to the United States.

What, then, were the motives of the Addington ministry in going to war in the spring of 1803? After a close study of British politics of the period it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the ministry was principally interested in its own preservation. At the time of the signature of the Treaty of London of October 1, 1801, the existence of the government seemed to be firmly linked with the preservation of peace, as Andréossy always con-

⁶⁷ *Diaries and Correspondence*, II, 19-20.

tinued to insist to his superiors. In February and March of 1803 the threats of the First Consul had done much to change the situation, arousing a vociferous demand in the country for a strong policy. The party of Grenville and Windham had raised its head, and the ministry began to fear that it would lose its majority in Parliament if it did not take a firm stand against France. Addington at first spread the report that Pitt was essentially in agreement with his policy; then (March) he went so far as to urge Pitt to come into the cabinet.⁶⁸ Though finding little encouragement in this quarter, Addington also made overtures to the Grenvilles, Malmsbury, and others who were known for their irreconcilable attitude toward France. Whether a formal bargain was made cannot be said with certainty, but it was in these days that the government entered upon its policy of no compromise with the Republic, screwing up its demands until the worst of the Jacobin-haters were satisfied that Bonaparte, even with the best of intentions, could make no further concessions. As early as March 22, Grenville, apparently well orientated in regard to everything that was going on, had announced triumphantly to the Marquis of Buckingham:

All the accounts I hear are of a nature not to leave the slightest doubt of war. Indeed, I think our government have so contrived things, that it is hardly possible for Bonaparte himself to recede, had he the wish to do so. The only real support of his power in France is the influence he possesses with part of the army, and the opinion of that country, that he is powerful and respected in Europe. If he now suffers himself to be intimidated by our preparations, he must lose all consideration both at home and abroad.⁶⁹

Here was an additional motive for the British government to force the issue. If the First Consul gave way, his prestige would suffer a blow from which it would find it difficult to recover. The ministers, like most Englishmen, considered his reputation entirely overblown, and it would have given them particular pleasure to prick the bubble. Lord Hawkesbury,

⁶⁸ G. Pellew, *The Life and Correspondence of Henry Addington* (1847), II, 114-116; Malmsbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 181-193.

⁶⁹ Buckingham, *Memoirs of the Court and Cabinets of George III*, III, 267.

himself the essence of mediocrity, on one occasion said to Malmsbury that he considered the First Consul ". . . very like Paul, really mad, that his temper grew quite outrageous, and that his unpopularity amounted to perfect hatred." Malmsbury, who in spite of his aversion for the Revolution and its offspring had a clearer appreciation of England's great enemy, observed that the same had been said of Frederick the Great soon after his accession, but that Sir Charles Williams (then minister to Saxony) had remarked: "*C'est parceque Frédéric a plus d'esprit qu'eux, que les Allemands le croient fou.*"⁷⁰

Sorel believes that the English government wanted war to hold back reform and maintain the ruling oligarchy.⁷¹ It is difficult, however, to ascribe so much importance to this motive, for the reform movement had made too little progress since the Peace of Amiens to arouse serious apprehension. There was much more sentiment for a continuation of the crusade against the Revolution, of which Bonaparte was still regarded the incarnation. To Grenville's partisans he was no more than

a Jacobin chief who has attained his end, and exercises the unbounded power he has acquired like a successful Jacobin; and it is a gross attempt to intrude so absurd a fallacy on our common sense [alluding to some remarks of Andréossy's] as to say we ought to dread the return of Jacobinism, while, in fact, it is upon us in full force.⁷²

Of much influence on Britain's policy was the fact that most of her ambassadors were men of similar views. Whitworth, Paget, Elliot, Jackson, and Elgin belonged to the old Pitt-Grenville party. In their letters to one another and in their private conversations they did not hesitate to fulminate and cast ridicule upon the ministry,⁷³ while their pronounced anti-French

⁷⁰ Feb. 16, 1803. Malmsbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 207-208.

⁷¹ Sorel, "Comment la paix d'Amiens fut appliquée," *Séances et travaux de l'Académie des Sciences morales et politiques*, N.S., CLIX, 682-683.

⁷² March 13, 1803. Malmsbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 236.

⁷³ A report of the Prefecture of Police of February 17, 1803, says of Elliot, the British ambassador to Naples, who was then passing through Paris: "Il vomit des horreurs contre le ministre britannique; il assure que la conduite qu'il tient amènera la banqueroute totale de l'Angleterre." Aulard, *Paris sous le Consulat*, III, 672.

bias did much to complicate Anglo-French relations and encouraged the government to take an uncompromising and finally warlike position. Whitworth himself, though sufficiently clairvoyant to appreciate the sensibilities of the First Consul, was not greatly interested in preserving the peace, and his own precarious relations with Bonaparte hardly inclined him to be conciliatory. Even before the date of the royal message to Parliament he was anticipating an early rupture.⁷⁴ On April 10 he wrote to Paget at Vienna:

I hope and trust that they [the French] will find at least one country both ready and able to check their career. Such is the object of the present discussion; which, if not speedily terminated in a manner favorable to us, as affording the security which the position of France renders indispensable, must be productive of war between the two countries. We will show these Gascons *que l'Angleterre peut seul lutter contre eux* — I think we might enter the lists without fear of the results.⁷⁵

Generally speaking, the diplomacy of both France and Great Britain from the time when the discussions between them had arrived at an acute stage is remarkable for its clumsiness. On the side of the Republic the volcanic temperament of the First Consul resulted in demonstrations which gave the British a pretext for arming and demanding explanations. He made the great mistake of judging England by her ministers, whom he saw derided and despised by their own supporters. Aside from this, Bonaparte's principal error was in the misconception of the role played by Russia, which he only drove into England's arms by his hints for a partition of the Ottoman Empire. The attitude of the Muscovites indeed played a decisive part in the determination of the British government to take up arms, for without the prospect of an eventual coalition against France it would have hesitated about forcing the issue. As it was, Addington

⁷⁴ A police report of March 6, 1803, relates that Whitworth is buying immense quantities of books and furniture, which he is sending to London, and has countermanded orders on a house he was preparing near the Port St. Honoré. Aulard, *Paris sous le Consulat*, III, 726.

⁷⁵ *Paget Papers*, II, 74.

and Hawkesbury made a serious miscalculation in assuming that Russia would refuse to accept the guardianship of Malta or offer her mediation. It seems that Simon Woronzov, the Franco-phobe Russian ambassador, had stiffened their backs considerably by assuring them that the Tsar would never consent to occupy Malta and urging them to insist upon their ultimatum.⁷⁶ What was their astonishment and chagrin when, while Whitworth was still at Paris, Woronzov suddenly transmitted Alexander's offer of mediation! As the mind of the British government was already irrevocably made up, Hawkesbury merely told the Russian that it was now too late. Two weeks later Woronzov read in the newspapers of Addington's declaration in Parliament that ". . . if the interposition of Russia had been offered, due regard would have been paid to it." To the ambassador's protests Hawkesbury replied that the Prime Minister had been misquoted, having only said that there had not been time to lay the Russian proposition before the King.⁷⁷ The bad position in which the late arrival of the Tsar's offer of mediation placed them was fully recognized by the British, many of whom blamed Whitworth for consenting to remain in Paris after the seven days period of the ultimatum had run out, thus giving the messenger from St. Petersburg time to arrive with Alexander's proposals, ". . . to put us in a very embarrassing situation by depriving us of the power of saying the whole was over before we were acquainted with the sentiments and offers from St. Petersburg."⁷⁸

On the whole the French were much more successful in presenting their case in a favorable light to the nation and the rest of Europe. Before Whitworth reached the coast, Talleyrand had prepared and sent after him a seventeen-page note reviewing with fair accuracy the whole of the negotiations since

⁷⁶ Portalis (file) to Talleyrand, 2 prairial an XI (May 22, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 212.

⁷⁷ As told by Woronzov to George Rose. Rose, *Diaries and Correspondence*, II, 43.

⁷⁸ Malmsbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 259.

the day of the King's message.⁷⁹ By May 19 this résumé had already been printed and copies sent to all French ambassadors and ministers. To the younger Portalis, then secretary of the London embassy, who was still believed to be in the British capital, Talleyrand transmitted six copies, of which he was to give one each to Fox, Sheridan, Erskine, Colonel Fitzpatrick, and the printer Buff, or any other of that profession whom Erskine might recommend. Portalis had already left London, and the minister's dispatch reached him only at Calais, but he sent the documents on to England, where a "reliable person" would see to their distribution.⁸⁰ At Paris, where the departure of Whitworth had been greeted with gloomy silence, the publication of this and other papers had an unexpectedly good effect. As such it was described by Talbot, the Secretary of the British embassy, who, on his return to England, reported that they had "somewhat electrified the nation, and made them less averse to war."⁸¹ In the reports of the Prefecture of Police of these days one notices a gradual improvement in public morale, but nowhere do we find any real enthusiasm — rather a kind of apathetic conviction of the government's righteousness.⁸² Abroad, the French documents also made a favorable impression, while the British exposition only tended to make the case of the Republic look better by the emphasis which the diplomatic correspondence naturally had placed on the question of Malta. "It will be difficult to convince the world that we are not fighting for Malta alone," wrote Castlereagh.⁸³ In Germany the grounds for the renewal of war seemed particularly trivial, even the most Anglophile Germans criticizing the British ministry for weakness, indecision, and pettiness; while from Vienna Champagny

⁷⁹ 23 floréal an XI (May 13, 1803). A.E., ANGLETERRE, 600, no. 202.

⁸⁰ Talleyrand to Portalis (fils), 29 floréal an XI (May 19, 1803); Portalis to Talleyrand, 2 prairial an XI (May 22, 1803). *Ibid.*, 600, nos. 202, 210.

⁸¹ June 5, 1803. Malmsbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 267.

⁸² Reports of May 12, 21, 22, 25, and 27, 1803. Aulard, *Paris sous le Consulat*, III, 70-71, 96-97, 107-109, 112-113.

⁸³ Charles W. Vane, Marquess of Londonderry, ed., *Correspondence, Despatches and other Papers of Viscount Castlereagh, Second Marquess of Londonderry*, V, 77.

reported a very favorable state of opinion as the result of the French publications.⁸⁴

Generally speaking, one must, however, call the Napoleonic policy a failure in as far as it regarded relations with England. The First Consul did not succeed in maintaining his position on a point of vital importance to his prestige without resorting to menaces which finally led to an unprofitable war. France could not have the slightest hope of success in a naval war: her ships were scattered in American and Indian waters, her sailors had died by the thousands in the Antilles, and her reviving commerce was bound to be swept off the seas. The occupation of Hanover and part of Naples was a poor compensation for such losses; only the hazardous project of a direct descent upon England was to offer some hope for ultimate victory. The claim sometimes brought forward that Bonaparte desired the conflict with England in the hope that sooner or later a profitable continental war would become attached to it hardly merits refutation. In a time of such general flux, when boundaries were changing overnight and treaty obligations strained to the breaking point, nothing could have been easier than to provoke a war with almost any of the powers. The only rational explanation, let us repeat, is that the rupture with England proved in every way inopportune to the head of the Republic. The Consulate was essentially a period of reconstruction; in two years of peace it had raised France to heights unknown in the annals of modern history. War could only tear down and disturb, and while it later became almost an integral part of the Napoleonic system, it was the conflict with England which gave its permanent military tone to the Empire.

⁸⁴ To Talleyrand, 15 prairial an XI (June 4, 1803). A.E., AUTRICHE, 373, no. 273.

CHAPTER IX

EUROPE AND THE ANGLO-FRENCH WAR

THE rupture of the Peace of Amiens changed the aspect of the Napoleonic diplomatic system on the Continent. The diplomatic offensive against the mistress of the seas was to be carried on along three parallel lines: First, the furthering of a plan of descent upon the English coast; second, the exclusion of British trade from the Continent; third, the inclusion of as large a part of Europe as possible in the French political system. The activity in the struggle to accomplish these ends was in full swing before the British ambassador had left France. Copies of the communications between France and England were spread broadcast throughout Europe in the hope of winning sympathy for the cause of the former. English goods were confiscated, and their importation was forbidden in all the territories over which French influence was paramount.¹ Most important and far-reaching, however, was the occupation of Hanover and the Neapolitan ports on the Gulf of Otranto. The army of General Gouvion St. Cyr took possession of the ports of Tarento, Otranto, and Brindisi, the court of Naples not daring to go further than a feeble protest.

The occupation of Hanover encountered infinitely greater difficulties. Ever since the personal union of the electorate with England, the Court of St. James had claimed that the British monarch could go to war as the ruler of one state while remaining neutral as the head of the other. It was a theory of much convenience in the continental wars of the previous century. If Hanover was in a position to serve as an advantageous base of operations, the "Elector" would fight loyally at the side of the "King." If it threatened to become a subject of embarrassment

¹ To Marescalchi, May 22; Arrêt consulaire of June 20. *Corr.*, VIII, nos. 6759, 6840.

by serving as a pawn for French colonies, the "Elector" would claim disinterested neutrality. While this style of reasoning seemed to have some theoretical basis, it was manifestly unsound in practice. Hanoverian soldiers always fought in large numbers in the English army, and the forests of the country had furnished timber for more than one English fleet. During the wars of the Revolution the threats of Prussia had restrained the Directory from attempting to attack the electorate, but, on the urgings of Paul I, Prussia had herself reluctantly decided to occupy it as a member of the League of Armed Neutrality.

From the viewpoint of the position in which France found herself in 1803, the control of Hanover during a war with Great Britain was almost imperative. From the electorate England could advantageously attack France through Holland, thus disturbing the formation of an army of invasion on the Channel. As a base from which to menace the Republic's South German clients and spread a net of intrigue through Central Europe it was unparalleled. On the other hand, the possession of Hanover was of immense offensive importance to the First Consul. It would be a very useful gage for the recovery of the French colonies in the eventual peace settlement. An army could be maintained at German cost, thus lightening the burden which her huge military establishment imposed upon France. Again and again one must note this factor influencing the decisions of the Republican and, later, of the Imperial government in extending or maintaining its grasp upon the neighboring states. What is often regarded as the principal object held in view by Bonaparte, however, was the exclusion of British commerce from Germany. The importance of the North Sea coast in this connection had already been recognized by the French government during the Revolution. Another motive for the occupation may have been the prospect of beguiling the King of Prussia by dangling the electorate before his eyes in the hope of gaining his alliance. Finally, if a continental war should some day become attached to the conflict with England, Hanover would become an excellent base of operations, especially if Prussia should be the enemy. For that

very reason the great North German power could not well afford to have the French in the electorate.

As early as March 12 Duroc had been sent to Berlin by the First Consul with a letter in which the Republic's policy in relation to England was justified. Duroc had also been instructed to insinuate that a result of the renewal of war would be the occupation of Hanover.² The arrival of Bonaparte's favorite aide-de-camp created quite a stir in the Prussian capital. "You can well conceive, Citizen Minister," wrote the French envoy, Bignon, "that the sudden arrival at Berlin of a man honored with the confidence of the First Consul has set all the diplomatic imaginations in activity."³ When Duroc presented the letter of his master and made the necessary verbal communications, the King and his ministers were seized with fright. Anything seemed better than this occupation. So the guarantee concerning Malta had been given, and the King had even promised to bring pressure to bear upon Great Britain to secure a softening of her naval practices.⁴ The neutrality of North Germany had indeed been the cornerstone of Prussian policy since the Treaty of Basel. In two supplementary conventions Prussia and France had agreed to a definite line of demarcation which the troops of the Republic were not to cross. Prussia, on the other hand, had guaranteed the neutrality of the states within the line.⁵ The chief exponent of this system was Count Haugwitz, who sought to ensure the peace of Europe by the formation of a triple alliance between Russia, France, and Prussia. Prussia desired to reserve for herself the hegemony of North Germany, being in her turn willing to close her eyes to French aggressions in Italy and those of Russia in Turkey. In the League of Armed Neutrality and in the settlement of the German indemnities the

² *Corr.*, VIII, no. 6629.

³ To Talleyrand, 1 germinal an XI (March 22, 1803). A.E., PRUSSE, 231, no. 101.

⁴ Frederick William III to Bonaparte, March 25, 1803. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 95.

⁵ Conventions of May 17, 1795, and Aug. 5, 1796. De Clercq, *Recueil des traités*, I, 242-244, 279-281.

type of concert so dear to Haugwitz had seemed on the point of being realized, but the situation had changed considerably since then. The relations between France and Russia were becoming decidedly colder, and the same had taken place, although to a far less noticeable degree, between the Republic and Prussia. The latter had been greatly offended by the conduct of the French government in the final stages of the settlement of the indemnities question. After surprising the Prussian envoy into the Convention of September 5, Bonaparte had paid no further attention to his ally, but had simply used the arrangement as a club to force the Austrians to a compromise on the question of Archduke Ferdinand's indemnity. In the December convention between France, Russia, and Austria, Prussia had been entirely ignored. Even the placid Frederick William had keenly resented such treatment.⁶ Yet the relations between France and Prussia had remained cordial enough to enable Bignon to write at the time of Duroc's mission: "M. de Haugwitz is as sincere as the King in his attachment to France and all voices here are in accord in this regard."⁷

The prospect of a French invasion of Hanover aroused the greatest alarm and consternation at Berlin. The situation was no longer the same as in 1796 and 1798, when Prussian threats of war had been sufficient to prevent the Directory from entertaining such a project. The treaties of 1795 and 1796 could no longer be regarded as being in force, while the Prussian dream of a universally recognized North German hegemony as yet lacked realization. A legal right to protect Hanoverian neutrality thus did not exist.

In such circumstances the statesmen of Berlin saw that it was

⁶In an interview between Frederick William and Maximilian Joseph of Bavaria the following June, the former complained: "On m'a engagé lestement et sans me laisser le temps d'y réfléchir dans la Convention de garantie du 5 septembre, et à peine a-t-elle été ratifiée par moi, qu'on m'a planté là. Ça n'est pas bien, ça n'est pas bien." As told by the Elector to Marandet, chargé d'affaires. Marandet to Talleyrand, 26 prairial an XI (June 15, 1803). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 179, no. 131.

⁷To Talleyrand, 1 germinal an XI (March 22, 1803). A.E., PRUSSE, 231, no. 101.

wisest to prevent the invasion by peaceable means. France had therefore been assured that Prussia would use her influence in London to secure the evacuation of Malta, and a protest had actually been sent to England on the subject.⁸ But in neither quarter did the court of Berlin gain any success. The British made known their intention of remaining in Malta and declared, moreover, that the island was not the real cause of the quarrel.⁹ The French reply to Frederick William's overtures was clothed in more soothing terms, but bore the same mark of finality. In case of war it would be absolutely necessary to take over Hanover, in order to cut off British commerce from the Elbe and Weser, but, the occupation once accomplished, the First Consul would then be happy to oblige the King of Prussia in everything. Laforest (who had now succeeded Bignon) was to be careful to give Prussia no hope of the occupation's being avoided or halted after its commencement, but he was to smooth her ruffled feelings as much as possible, saying that the main object of the measure was to win prisoners for later exchange against captured French sailors. But if Prussia threatened to throw obstacles in the path of the Republic, it was to be brought home to her that France would then be placed ". . . in a sort of necessity to open her arms to Austria, who is always at the door and who burns to gain us again for an alliance in the style of that of 1756." In any case, France would soon need an alliance to protect her back on the Continent while she faced England. Such a one could be found at Berlin or Vienna: "Our inclinations are for Prussia; may she not force us to court Austria."¹⁰

Prussia was thus compelled to choose between allowing France to proceed or declaring such action to constitute a *casus belli*. On May 28 a meeting took place at Körbelitz, in which the King took counsel with his chief military and civil advisers as

⁸ Frederick William to Lucchesini, March 25, 1803. A.E., PRUSSE, 231, no. 102; Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 96.

⁹ Dispatch to Lucchesini, May 6. Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 99.

¹⁰ Talleyrand to Laforest, 27 floréal an XI (May 17, 1803). A.E., PRUSSE, 231, no. 154; Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 101.

to the proper course to be taken. Haugwitz proposed a note to be sent to the ambassador in Paris, ordering him to communicate a plan to the French government by which it was to refrain from occupying Hanover in return for contributions to be paid by that state. He should also announce that Prussia was mobilizing her army in the event that her suggestions were ignored. These proposals were opposed by the King and almost all of the military leaders present. Only the suggestion of a monetary compensation for non-occupation was to be embodied in the note.¹¹ One can imagine with what relief this epistle was received by the First Consul, who, naturally enough, rejected the Prussian proposals — the principle of North German neutrality was thus well on the way to becoming a dead letter.

As early as March 30 Bonaparte had ordered his aide-de-camp Lacuée to make a tour of inspection in Holland and Hanover. He was to ". . . estimate the strength of the Hanoverian army and the obstacles which might be put in the way of the invasion."¹² At the time of the declaration of war the French troops in Holland under the command of General Mortier numbered about 24,000 men. They were immediately set in motion, and, though obliged to avoid Prussian territory by wide detours, arrived on the frontier of Hanover in an exceedingly short space of time. The Electorate was ruled by a weak regency, which was further handicapped by lack of instructions from the Elector. At the last moment Baron Ompteda was sent to Berlin with an appeal for assistance, but the chance of help from that quarter was now gone. With tears in his eyes Ompteda pleaded with Laforest to delay the march of the French troops. The ambassador, though moved by his anguish, could of course do nothing. Haugwitz was equally adamant when the Hanoverian envoy requested the intervention of Prussia, and Laforest was able to describe his attitude as entirely satisfactory.¹³

¹¹ For text see Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 102.

¹² *Corr.*, VIII, no. 6658.

¹³ To Talleyrand, 15 prairial an XI (June 4, 1803). A.E., PRUSSE, 232, no. 21.

On June 3 the Hanoverians, having received no definite word from their sovereign, signed the Convention of Suhlingen. Their soldiers were not to serve again during the war, the French were to have jurisdiction over the country, and all military stores were to be surrendered.¹⁴ To Talleyrand's demand that the Convention be ratified the English government turned a deaf ear. George III is indeed said to have thrown the document in the face of the minister who presented it to him. Hawkesbury replied in a long note, setting out the British view of the personal union of the United Kingdom and Hanover. The King would never admit that he could justly be attacked in one capacity for his conduct in the other. His Majesty would appeal to the Empire and the powers who had guaranteed its constitution, though in the meantime he would abstain from such acts as might be considered contrary to the Convention of Suhlingen.¹⁵

The success of French diplomacy in occupying Hanover and Naples without coming to an open rupture with one or more of the continental powers is even more striking when we consider their attitude before these steps were taken. Although none of the powers approved of the British policy regarding Malta, they had not been willing to support the First Consul in his efforts to oblige her to give way on the question. Austria moved with evident reluctance, while Prussia only acted when she found it necessary to avert embarrassment for herself. The Tsar was anything but anxious to be obliging to Bonaparte. With the French entry into Naples their relations were bound to become even worse, for by the occupation of the ports on the Gulf of Otranto the Russians at Corfu were held in check more completely than the English in Malta. That Bonaparte had designs upon Turkey was known in St. Petersburg from his direct and continual solicitations for an arrangement concerning the Porte's early demise. In January of 1803 Markov had therefore received instructions which plainly rejected the idea of a common

¹⁴ G. de Martens, *Recueil des traités*, VIII, 84-86.

¹⁵ June 15, 1803. A.N., AF IV, 1672, Plaque I, fol. 98-100.

advance against the Ottoman Empire.¹⁶ Then, on February 20, arrived a note which ought to have fully enlightened the First Consul as to what he had to expect from Russia: "The Emperor, satisfied with the lot which providence has assigned him, does not plan aggrandizement in any direction: he expects that no one should aggrandize himself at the expense of Turkey. Let the First Consul give assurances on this article and peace with England will be facilitated."¹⁷

One could hardly speak more plainly. In spite of this, the First Consul had, after receiving the news of the royal message of March 8, sent Colonel Colbert to St. Petersburg to appeal to the Tsar for his mediation. For the moment whatever projects may have been entertained for advances in the Near East were given up. In the "*Exposé de la Situation de la République*," which appeared the very day on which the brusque Russian note was delivered, the interest of France in the preservation of the Ottoman Empire was definitely expressed. On the morrow Talleyrand wrote to Markov: "It has sufficed that you should have expressed the wish for it, that the First Consul has inserted in this publication a phrase of such a nature as to reassure the Ottoman Porte on all the evil rumors which may have reached her."¹⁸ And to Hédouville: "You will have remarked in the exposé the article concerning Constantinople, which was drawn up as soon as we knew the wishes of Russia."¹⁹ To Markov's surprise, Talleyrand also began to speak of the long-awaited indemnity of the King of Sardinia and submitted the project of a convention on the question. The First Consul on his part personally assured the ambassador that he had no views whatever on Egypt.²⁰

¹⁶ Alexander Woronzov to Markov, Dec. 24, 1802 (Jan. 5, 1803, western style). *Sbornik*, LXX, 619.

¹⁷ Alexander Woronzov to Markov, Jan. 20 (Feb. 1), 1803. *Ibid.*, LXXVII, 20 ff.

¹⁸ Feb. 21, 1803. *Ibid.*, LXXVII, 42.

¹⁹ March 12, 1803. *Ibid.*, LXXVII, 158.

²⁰ Markov to the Tsar, March 4 (16). *Ibid.*, LXXVII, 61.

The way was thus prepared for the favorable reception of Colbert in St. Petersburg. That the decision of the Tsar would be of the utmost importance was realized by Whitworth, who wrote to Admiral Warren, his colleague at the Russian capital:

Both England and France (or I should say the First Consul) look to Russia for support. . . . The great point to be now carried with Russia is, I apprehend, not so much to engage it in war with us at the first outset — for that, I suppose, would be nearly impossible — but to ensure its concurrence in and countenance of our measures and conduct.²¹

It was this moral support which Bonaparte now hoped to obtain for himself. In a last desperate attempt to preserve the peace by the intercession of Russia, he approached Markov on May 4 with the suggestion of a Russian occupation. The ambassador did not dare reject so flattering an offer on his own authority; he took the proposition ad referendum, though informing Whitworth the same night that he hardly expected his master to accept it.²²

On the eleventh the Tsar's answer to the First Consul's request for mediation arrived.²³ Although Alexander offered his mediation only if both powers should express a desire for it, this partial accession to the wishes of the French government created considerable stir at London. Even more favorable to the French cause was the Tsar's affirmative answer to the First Consul's suggestion that he take Malta en dépôt, though he added the significant condition that the neutrality of Naples and the Hanseatic cities would have to be respected.²⁴ At the date of the writing of this letter (June 5), however, Gouvion St. Cyr's army was already in Naples, and the occupation of Hanover, so fatal to the independence of the Hansa towns, had been completed with the Convention of Suhlingen.

²¹ March 14, 1803. Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 117.

²² Whitworth to Hawkesbury, May 4, 1803. Browning, *England and Napoleon in 1803*, p. 223.

²³ Alexander to the First Consul, April 10, 22, 1803. *Sbornik*, LXXVII, 100.

²⁴ Rescript of the Tsar to Markov, May 24 (June 5), 1803. A.E., RUSSIE, 142, no. 133.

With these steps the chances of an impartial Russian mediation between France and England were greatly lessened. Bonaparte still clung to the idea, however, and on June 12, in a long interview which lasted until three o'clock in the morning, he informed Markov of the conditions of peace he would accept. Let Malta remain under the guardianship of Russia and the English receive Lampedusa. The moment Malta was evacuated, he would do the same for Holland, Switzerland, and Naples. Even the King of Sardinia would be compensated. Finally, the questions in dispute would be submitted to a general congress or the absolute arbitration of the Tsar himself, Bonaparte laying particular emphasis upon the latter. If Alexander adjudged Malta to England, he would resign himself to the loss of a case which had appeared good to him, but he could not in honor recede on the question of his own volition. He recommended that Markov send an account of these more than liberal suggestions to Simon Woronzov at London, who would be able to transmit them to the British government. The Russian acceded to this request, even submitting the draft of his letter to Talleyrand for correction; but in a secret cipher he added the significant comment that he considered these tentatives insincere, and that the First Consul probably hoped Britain would refuse, thus incurring all the blame for the continuation of the war.²⁵

It is possible that Markov was correct in this assumption, but the fact remains that Bonaparte was offering conditions which went far beyond the utmost he had offered to concede before. If Britain had really desired peace it would have been a simple matter to call his bluff. But she was no longer satisfied with the organization of Europe as it had been consecrated at Luneville and at Amiens. We can find no greater proof of the fact that the peace of 1802 was essentially a breathing space and did not involve a sincere recognition of the gains of the Revolution, than that an arrangement such as this, which involved a retreat by France from the advanced position she had

²⁵ Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution française*, VI, 312-314.

occupied after Amiens, was not even considered. At London one now dreamed of a peace like that of 1713, by which the Republic would be restricted to the limits of the former monarchy with a girdle of barrier states instead of vassals.

Pelham's ideas [writes Malmsbury during these days] remain the same — to induce the three great continental powers to act, either by large subsidies or by large offers — the Low Countries, and even Holland, to Prussia, all Lombardy to Austria, to Russia whatever she might ask. I perfectly concurred in all he said.²⁶

A natural result of the renewal of war between France and Great Britain was the tightening of the Republic's hold upon her client states. It was thus possible to exclude British commerce from the countries in question, to limit British intrigue upon the Continent, and secure a certain amount of material assistance in the struggle with the island kingdom. The Batavian Republic had seen the approaching rupture with the greatest apprehension, for no one could doubt but that France would never permit it to remain neutral. Schimmelpenninck had therefore made every effort to prevent the break, though his influence with the Addington cabinet had not been very great. When the war had finally broken out, the Dutch betrayed manifest reluctance to become parties thereto. But the pressure placed upon them was irresistible, and on June 25 a treaty of alliance was signed at Paris. They agreed to support 18,000 French and 16,000 Dutch troops, furnish five ships of the line, as many frigates, and a hundred sloops, and provide the facilities for the transport of 62,000 men and 4,000 horses for a descent upon England. In return France guaranteed the integrity of Dutch territory and the return of the Dutch colonies, besides promising her good offices for the restitution of Ceylon.²⁷

Switzerland soon followed with her adhesion to the French war system, a convention being signed in September giving the Republic the right to recruit 16,000 soldiers within the

²⁶ July 12, 1803. Malmsbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 285.

²⁷ Text in G. de Martens, *Recueil des traités*, VII, 702-706.

little country; this number might be increased to 25,000 if France were attacked.²⁸ Genoa was forced to furnish 6,000 sailors and large quantities of naval stores, while the Italian Republic continued to pay 20,000,000 francs annually into the French war chest.

Thus France had greatly improved her position within two months of the departure of Whitworth from Paris. With the exception of Portugal, the continent from North Germany to the Adriatic was already closed to British trade. England's great outpost, Hanover, was in the hands of the French, forging a new link in Bonaparte's German policy, and supporting troops which the Republic could ill afford to pay herself. From Naples the First Consul continued to threaten the Balkan peninsula and the eastern Mediterranean. The allies of the Republic remained as reluctant, but nevertheless effectual, partners at her side, and her control over them was soon more absolute than ever before. Yet French diplomacy was to face an extremely difficult task in the following two years. Britain was sure to seek victory by gaining new alliances on the Continent, while France, faced by the necessity of retaining her hold upon the territories she had occupied and maintaining her influence in Italy and Germany, was certain to come into collision with one or another of the powers at some future date. Only a firm alliance, such as would guard her back while she faced England, could ensure the safety of the Republic. To secure this without making material sacrifices in his political system therefore became the problem with which the First Consul was now called upon to deal.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, VIII, 132-146.

CHAPTER X

FIRST FLIRTATIONS WITH PRUSSIA, 1803-1804

MUCH doubt has been raised concerning the sincerity of the efforts of the First Consul to gain a Prussian alliance after the rupture of the Peace of Amiens. Yet, no matter what degree of earnestness one may incline to ascribe to his proposals, there can be no denying the fact that such an alliance would have been advantageous both to France and to his own interests. Why indeed should these offers not have been sincere? None of them entailed any considerable sacrifice on his part, while any one, if accepted, would have materially strengthened his position in Europe.

Prussia, in fact, was at that time the only practicable candidate for an alliance with France. Russia, whose friendship the First Consul had thus far appeared to prefer to any other, was rapidly turning from coldness to hostility; it was from her indeed that an attack on the Continent was most to be expected. There remained only Austria and Prussia, and Bonaparte appears to have carefully weighed all the factors which inclined him to one or the other German power. His continual and amazingly frank remarks to the Austrian ambassador offer ample testimony to the degree in which this problem occupied his mind during the year preceding the renewal of war with England. Notable is a conversation with Philip Cobenzl which took place on May 28, 1802. After intimating that the peace with England could scarcely last many years, as the English would not permit him tranquilly to restore the French marine, he went on to say that a renewal of the conflict would inevitably lead to a new war upon the Continent. In that case he would have need of either Austria or Prussia. Of the two the Prussians would be the more desirable allies, as an augmentation of their power would not render them a danger to France

such as would be constituted by a stronger Austria. What was more, her alliance was more easily to be bought than that of the Emperor; it would be enough to give her a bone to gnaw.¹ It is clear the First Consul feared that an arrangement with the Hofburg would involve sacrifices he was not ready to make.

Prussia thus remained the only possibility, and it was she whom Talleyrand, five days after Whitworth's departure, designated as the ally whom France would now be forced to seek.² The court of Berlin seemed to possess the proper attitude of resignation that the First Consul liked to see in his partners; the spirit of adventure which had characterized the policy of Frederick William II no longer ruled in the councils of Potsdam. Like everyone else, Prussia had her little ambitions, in behalf of which she at times showed every willingness to take a hand in the international power game, but of late no other state had so frankly and completely acknowledged and remained within its limits. The French public was also favorably inclined to a Prussian connection. As for the First Consul, it was more his good sense than any personal enthusiasm which drove him in this direction. For while Prussia promised to be a docile and unexact ally, she was also too much of a limiting factor to suit his taste. "Beurnonville is right in saying that we will never get anything done by the assistance of Prussia," Bonaparte had declared to Talleyrand as early as 1800.³ But in 1803-1804 it was a defensive and not an offensive alliance of which France had need upon the Continent, and for such, at any rate, Prussia was sure to be an ideal partner. After examining the North German power's position, one can also understand why a firm and reliable connection suited her aims and interests at this time.

The Prussian government of the early post-revolutionary period was an interesting relic of the time of the great Frederick.

¹ P. Cobenzl to Colloredo, June 1, 1802. S.-A., FRANKREICH, 267, fol. 100-106. Similar views were expressed by him in September and December. Cobenzl's reports of Sept. 6 and Dec. 21. *Ibid.*, 267.

² Talleyrand to Laforest, 27 floréal an XI (May 17, 1803). A.E., PRUSSE, 231, no. 144.

³ June 1, 1800. *Corr.*, VI, no. 4860.

That monarch had organized an administrative system which required his personal supervision in every detail, the work being principally done through cabinet secretaries. These would inevitably acquire an abnormal degree of influence when the sovereign was weak and irresolute. Thus, under a monarch like Frederick William III, the cabinet secretaries often enjoyed the King's confidence to a greater degree than did the chief ministers. The man who had exercised the deciding voice in the foreign policy of Prussia since the Peace of Basel was Count Haugwitz, of whom we have already spoken as the chief exponent of the neutrality system. He has been described as a man who believed that ". . . politics is the art of keeping peace as long as possible,"⁴ but, as we have seen, he was capable of advising a strong policy when occasion in his opinion demanded it. The principle of "peace at any price" was more properly represented by the King and his favorite councilors, Lombard and Beyme, whom Metternich once called the "French and the German Jacobins."⁵ It was they who made the policy of Prussia appear timorous in the extreme. Yet it was strongly felt at Berlin that a certain degree of expansive activity was necessary to balance the gains made by France and Russia, and any reasonable proposal for an alliance from the First Consul was certain to receive serious consideration.

The first direct tentative for a more intimate union was contained in a note delivered by Talleyrand to Lucchesini on May 29. After denying any intention of extending the occupation of Hanover to other North German territories, the interest of Prussia in the affairs of the Electorate was freely recognized. If the residence of the French in Hanover should promise to be an extended one, it would be well for the two nations to come to an understanding on the matter.⁶ It was precisely the kind

⁴ Bailieu, "Haugwitz und Hardenberg," *Deutsche Rundschau*, XX (1879), 273.

⁵ From a conversation between Metternich and Tsar Alexander, Metternich to Colloredo, Oct. 29, 1805. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82.

⁶ This note was appended by Lucchesini to his report of the same date. Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 104.

of language calculated to sooth the ruffled feelings of the court of Berlin. The King was gratified, moreover, by the marked consideration shown Prussian subjects during the occupation. Lucchesini was instructed to present a note regretting the Republic's decision to occupy, but expressing the utmost confidence in her assurance that she would limit herself to Hanover. Prussia hoped that the French generals would receive the strictest orders to respect the Hanseatic cities and the freedom of navigation of the Elbe and Weser.⁷ At the same time the King wrote to Haugwitz, informing him of his firm determination to preserve a strict neutrality; only if this were violated by the French would he take up arms.⁸

The facility with which Prussia had accommodated herself to a measure so injurious to her interests hardly tended to increase the First Consul's consideration for his prospective ally. Laforest had also written from Berlin: "His Majesty is timid and is surrounded by timid people."⁹ No attention was therefore paid to Frederick William's pleas; orders were given for the occupation of Cuxhaven and Ritzebüttel, towns connected with Hamburg, and the concentration of troops in Hanover went on without interruption.¹⁰ Lucchesini was assured that the Hanseatic cities would be respected; as for the two places occupied, Prussia had herself found it necessary to occupy them in 1801.¹¹

At Berlin the excitement and anxiety were extreme. Cuxhaven and Ritzebüttel controlled the commerce of the Elbe; the foreign trade of Prussia was thus certain to be stifled, for Britain would surely reply to the French measures with a blockade. Haugwitz negotiated almost daily with Alopeus, the Russian ambassador, regarding an alliance for the protection

⁷ Frederick William to Lucchesini, June 6. Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 107; Lucchesini to Talleyrand, June 15, 1803. A.E., PRUSSE, 232, no. 35.

⁸ Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 111.

⁹ *Ibid.*, II, Introd., p. xxxvi.

¹⁰ Orders to Berthier. *Corr.*, VIII, nos. 6821, 6822, 6823.

¹¹ Talleyrand to Lucchesini, 4 messidor an XI (June 23, 1803). A.E., PRUSSE, 232, no. 57.

of North Germany, and protested vigorously to Laforest.¹² Meanwhile, the delay of Frederick William in returning from his Franconian possessions seriously hampered any effective action. His conduct is commented upon by George Jackson, now secretary to his brother at the Berlin embassy:

The King is not returned and the delay is supposed to be intentional, that he may put off the pressing demands of Russia, as to whether he will continue to see with indifference the progress of the French in the north of Germany. Count Haugwitz asserts that he urges the King to adopt a more becoming line of conduct, but that his efforts are paralyzed by the secret counsels of those who serve French interests.¹³

When the hesitating monarch finally returned to his capital, he was greeted by Haugwitz with an energetic memorandum, in which the policy he considered essential for Prussia was outlined. An army of 50,000 men should be mobilized, agreements reached with Russia and the North German states, and a series of restricting requirements made of the French. Chief among these would be the reduction of the army in Hanover to 16,000 men, the cessation of French armaments in Germany, and the evacuation of Cuxhaven and Ritzbüttel.¹⁴ There can be no question but that this paper made a strong impression upon the King, but he would not consider taking any positive steps until he had assured himself of the uncompromising attitude of the First Consul. He therefore decided to send Lombard, the most trusted of his councilors, to Brussels, where Bonaparte was at that time making his headquarters during a tour of inspection of the eastern departments. Lombard was entrusted with a very moderate personal letter from the King to the First Consul, in which he mildly protested against the occupation of Cux-

¹² Laforest to Talleyrand, 1 messidor an XI (June 19, 1803). *Ibid.*, 232, no. 55. Alexander had proposed a defensive league between Prussia, Russia, Denmark, Saxony, and Hesse-Cassel to resist further French encroachments in North Germany.

¹³ June 27, 1803. Jackson, *Diaries and Letters*, I, 147.

¹⁴ Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 120.

haven and Ritzbüttel and begged for a satisfactory explanation of this act.¹⁵

To understand the episode which followed, let us take a glance at the man who exercised such a profound influence on the policy of the Prussian state, Johann von Lombard. Of French extraction, his education, like that of many of his contemporaries everywhere in Europe, had also been primarily French. He was one of those men who always see the weakness in every policy and therefore are seldom able to come to a decision. It can hardly be said that the King was dominated by him, for Lombard was too much of a negative influence. The Councilor's importance lay in his peculiar ability to read his master's mind and formulate his opinions in a systematic manner. "The King's chief happiness," report George Jackson, "consists in the absence of all trouble. His disposition is slothful; he is guided by his fears and distrusts his powers."¹⁶ A monarch thus inclined would be only too glad to lean upon a counselor who knew how to combine hesitation and indecision into a system. The least one can say is that Lombard exercised a great influence, his pacific disposition giving him particular value in his master's eyes. Even during the Revolution he had been favorable to the French cause, and we find that the Consular government was perfectly aware of this fact. In November of 1802 Talleyrand presented him with 2,000 louis, a gift for which he returned thanks with the words: "I would not have a good Prussian heart if it were not French at the same time."¹⁷

Bonaparte's task was clear. To win over the envoy whom he already knew to be favorably disposed did not seem difficult, but it was necessary to do it so completely that the policy of Prussia would be permanently influenced thereby. Everyone knows of the charm which the Corsican could exercise when he cared to exert himself. Lombard was certainly carried away

¹⁵ July 7, 1803. *Ibid.*, II, no. 123.

¹⁶ May 4, 1803. Jackson, *Diaries and Letters*, I, 138.

¹⁷ H. Prutz, *Preussische Geschichte*, III, 374.

by it, and before he returned to Berlin he was convinced that the First Consul was the one person who could raise Prussia to a commanding position in Europe. As regards the real aim of his mission he had no success whatever, for not a promise would the great man give on his future policy in North Germany. He did, however, convince Lombard that he was entirely wrapped up in the war with England; that nothing was further from his desires than a war upon the Continent. He spoke of a warm friendship and firm alliance between the two countries and even hinted at an imperial crown for Prussia.¹⁸ When Lombard departed, he carried with him a portrait of the First Consul for the King and a dress from Madame Bonaparte for the Queen. The effect of his report upon the King is best related in his own words:

I have never seen the King so happy. I found him on the island of Paons, where I had to stay three or four days speaking of nothing but Bonaparte. The First Consul spoke with infinite graciousness of Frederick; but he did it in such a fashion as to show his interest in the successor of the Prussian hero. The reports which I had the honor to make to his Majesty and all that I added personally have been to him a source of great satisfaction, of thankfulness and of relief.¹⁹

As this rhapsody was addressed to Talleyrand, it may have been somewhat rosily colored, but there can be no doubt that the King's anxieties were largely quieted. The mobilization of troops and other military measures now seemed entirely superfluous. A personal letter of the First Consul's, which reiterated his pacific intentions and reaffirmed his friendliness to Prussia, served to reassure Frederick William still further.²⁰ But the King showed his usual timidity concerning decisive measures when it came to the question of an alliance. Russia would have to be consulted first and her adhesion obtained if possible. The Prussian cabinet was not to be had for an aggressive connection; it sought an arrangement with the sole object of

¹⁸ For Lombard's reports on his communication with the First Consul see Baillet, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, nos. 126, 127.

¹⁹ Aug. 15, 1803. *Ibid.*, II, no. 131. ²⁰ July 29, 1803. *Corr.*, VIII, no. 6956.

guaranteeing the peace of the Continent. "It only goes that far," opined Laforest, "so that the First Consul will not turn his eyes elsewhere; it will not go far enough to associate itself on liberal lines."²¹

Haugwitz's old hopes for a triple alliance for the preservation of the continental equilibrium were now revived in Berlin. It was felt that the danger in the European situation consisted in the contrast between revolutionary France and the old order. This divergence, it was believed, might be nullified by encouraging the monarchical form of government in France and the formation of a concert between France, Russia, and Prussia.²² But these dreams found no encouragement in either Paris or St. Petersburg. The First Consul was intensely irritated with the excessively partial Russian mediation projects, and he declared emphatically that he wanted an alliance with Prussia alone.²³ Equally definite was the refusal of the Russians to lend themselves to the arrangement proposed by Prussia. Early in July Alexander had suggested a defensive alliance in a personal letter to the King, in which he warned his friend against the blandishments of the French. After the return of Lombard, Frederick William had replied that he was now entirely reassured on the intentions of the First Consul. The proposals of Russia would no longer apply to the situation; instead, Prussia considered some sort of arrangement between the three states which would guarantee France security upon the Continent in return for limiting her activities in North Germany as the most desirable solution of the problem. In October came the long-delayed decision of Russia. Not only did the Tsar reject the Prussian suggestions, but he uttered the most serious doubts about the wisdom of Prussia's policy: "It appears evident to me that the arrangement projected by the ministers of Your Majesty will more than ever lead France to give free reign

²¹ To Talleyrand, 16 fructidor an XI (Sept. 3, 1803). A.E., PRUSSE, 232, no. 144.

²² Haugwitz's memoir of Aug. 12, 1803. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 130.

²³ Reports of Lucchesini, Sept. 6 and 10, 1803. *Ibid.*, II, nos. 132, 133.

to her ambitions, she then being absolutely without concern regarding the side of the Continent and being able to direct all her forces against England." ²⁴

The cabinet of Berlin was thus forced to the unpleasant realization that its only alternative was to treat with one or the other power on the basis of a separate alliance.²⁵ That it was France with whom these negotiations were to be carried on was the natural result of the fact that a concert with Russia might lead to a continental war. Short of taking up arms an agreement with the Republic remained as the only means which might check her march in North Germany.²⁶ Because of the First Consul's cordial treatment of Lombard and his expressions of friendship for Prussia, it was hoped that he would lend himself to a reasonable arrangement which would guarantee the security of North Germany. Only his determination to continue the occupation of Ritzbüttel gave pause to the statesmen of Berlin. Even Lombard uttered his doubts on this point to Laforest: some way must be found to get around this difficulty; would France evacuate if England consented to lift her blockade of the Elbe and Weser? ²⁷ The French envoy knew what he was about when he confessed his doubts on the point — Bonaparte was not the man to release easily what he once held in his grasp.

Lucchesini was now instructed to begin negotiations for an alliance with Talleyrand. From the beginning the First Consul announced his unwillingness to discuss the evacuation of Hanover. For a real alliance, on the other hand, he was willing to offer the reduction of the army of occupation, greater freedom for Prussian trade with England, and his support in

²⁴ Alexander to Frederick William, July 4; Frederick William to the Tsar, Aug. 16; the Tsar to Frederick William, Oct. 6, 1803. Bailleu, *Briefwechsel*, nos. 34, 37, 40.

²⁵ Haugwitz to Frederick William, Oct. 26. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 142.

²⁶ Haugwitz's memoir of Nov. 3, 1803. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 143.

²⁷ Laforest to Talleyrand, 16 fructidor an XI (Sept. 3, 1803). A.E., PRUSSE, 232, no. 144.

German questions.²⁸ Prussia was ready to accept these conditions in principle, but additional points like the evacuation of Cuxhaven and Ritzbüttel seemed of essential importance to her.²⁹ As the court of Berlin became more willing to compromise, however, Bonaparte showed himself less inclined to do so. His dislike of purely defensive combinations, particularly when they also limited his orbit, is nowhere more evident than during the course of these negotiations. He now proposed a plan by which Prussia would guarantee the possessions of the Porte and the changes in Italy.³⁰ Nothing was further from the views of the Berlin statesmen. Their acceptance would have been to issue a public menace to Great Britain and Russia, while an alliance on this particular basis would have been considered by Austria as directed against her also. Everywhere Prussia would have lent herself to the support of French interests — in return she was to receive nothing but the promise of consideration in matters in which France was trespassing upon her rights.

To have accepted the First Consul's propositions would have been a gamble for which the stakes were by no means worth the risk and in which only the hardest of adventurers would have taken part. Of all persons Frederick William III was the farthest removed from this type. The conduct of the French in Hanover was also hardly calculated to win his confidence. Having squeezed over 17,000,000 francs out of the Electorate during the year, they now forced the Estates to ask for loans from neighboring states. Inevitably these evinced but slight enthusiasm about subjecting their money to such a precarious risk, but the threats of the French succeeded in forcing 3,000,000 thalers from Hamburg and 1,335,000 from Lübeck, Bremen, and Hesse-Cassel. The Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin added to the embarrassment of the Prussian

²⁸ Lucchesini's report of Nov. 30, 1803. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 146.

²⁹ Instructions to Lucchesini, Dec. 15, 1803. *Ibid.*, II, no. 149.

³⁰ Report of Lucchesini; Talleyrand to Laforest, Dec. 30, 1803. *Ibid.*, II, nos. 151, 152.

court by complaining of violations of his territory by French troops. So great was the irritation that even Lombard and Beyme expressed their feelings in no uncertain terms, the former going about remarking that he had been deceived at Brussels.³¹ Yet neither the King nor his councilors had the courage to break off the negotiations immediately, and Lucchesini was ordered to try once more to convert the First Consul to the Prussian plan.³²

The second French refusal was even more emphatic than the first. Talleyrand informed the Prussian envoy that his government's project would "... despoil France of the only forces with which she could fight England." He referred especially to the demand for the free navigation of the Elbe and Weser.³³ Frederick William now finally realized that nothing more was to be gained, but he still feared the anger of the First Consul if the negotiations should be broken off too abruptly. The renewed reinforcement of the French armies in Hanover and Holland furnished food for new apprehensions concerning a sudden attack if Bonaparte should feel that Prussia was turning against him. Haugwitz again proposed the mobilization of a considerable body of troops under the pretext that the strained relations then existing between Austria and Bavaria required Prussian preparedness.³⁴ But the King was still obdurate; any move which threatened to result in open conflict threw him into a panic. On February 21 he wrote to Alexander, finally admitting that there was no purpose in trying to come to an agreement with France. Would the Tsar kindly express his opinion on the questions at issue? How far could Prussia count upon Alexander and his allies if she were some day forced to take up arms to resist French aggressions? ³⁵ To Haugwitz his master confided that he would break off the alliance negotiations with France if the Russian answer should prove favor-

³¹ Jackson, *Diaries and Letters*, I, 160.

³² Jan. 19, 1804. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 154.

³³ Lucchesini's report of Feb. 4, 1804. *Ibid.*, II, no. 156.

³⁴ Memorandum of Haugwitz, February. *Ibid.*, II, no. 161.

³⁵ Bailleu, *Briefwechsel*, no. 48.

able.³⁶ The Tsar's reply arrived at the end of March; it left much to be wished for on the point of enthusiasm. After stating frankly that Prussia's past policy merited censure, and refusing to give any definite advice, he ended with the equivocal pledge:

If I see Your Majesty fighting for the defense of the independence and well-being of all Europe, he may rest assured that I will be at his side in an instant, and Prussia will not have to fear that Russia will desert her in so noble a cause.³⁷

This half-assurance encouraged the King to bring his hesitation to an end; yet he proceeded with all his customary caution. He did not care to be enmeshed in difficulties by Russia, and he hoped to find a means of breaking off the negotiation which would not be considered by France as a declaration of hostility. On April 3 Haugwitz communicated the decision of the cabinet to Laforest and emphasized that this move was not motivated by an unfriendly spirit, being founded solely on the impossibility of coming to an agreement. He declared that Prussia would never join in any hostile combination against France as long as the army in Hanover was not increased and the neutrality of North Germany respected.³⁸ Thus ended for the time all hope of a Franco-Prussian alliance. At the same time Haugwitz resigned as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Disappointed by the failure of his system of North German neutrality and embittered by the rejection of his advice at critical moments, he desired to retire into private life.

Was the Napoleonic diplomacy a success or failure in these negotiations? The decision of this question depends on the light in which the First Consul's policy is regarded. Though he did not succeed in his attempt to win Prussia to a sweeping endorsement of his political system, he could hardly have expected to do so. He did attain the recognition of his acts in North

³⁶ March 13, 1804. Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 163.

³⁷ March 15, 1804. Bailieu, *Briefwechsel*, no. 49.

³⁸ Karl August, Fürst von Hardenberg, *Denkwürdigkeiten* (1877), I, 480; A. Thiers, *History of the Consulate and the Empire* (1865), I, 574.

Germany without being forced to bind himself by an alliance. Of even greater value to France was Prussia's solemn promise that she would not enter a hostile coalition. It was thus made possible for Bonaparte to consolidate his position in North Germany in comparative safety, while concentrating his attention on the struggle with Great Britain. Whether the good will on both sides could prevail if Germany became the battlefield of a continental war was another question, which time alone could decide.

CHAPTER XI

THE WAR WITH ENGLAND (1803-1804) — PROJECTS OF INVASION

THE immediate results of the renewal of war with Great Britain were disastrous for the French Republic. About half of its merchant vessels then at sea were gathered in by British cruisers, and the consequent restriction of commerce brought with it a flood of bankruptcies, estimated at 80,000,000 francs in Paris alone. Yet the country rallied to the government, for while the war was never popular, the First Consul had in the main succeeded in convincing the nation that it had been forced upon him by his adversary. But the most important factor in the revival of public morale was probably the hope that France would at last find means to get at her great enemy — for the first time in modern history an invasion of England on a grand scale seemed within the realm of possibility.

Probably no phase of Napoleonic history has been viewed from so many different angles as his project of invading England. More than any of the great problems regarding Napoleon's foreign policy, this one carries with it an importance decisive for our conception of the political system of the First Consul and Emperor in the period preceding the war of the Third Coalition. If we consider the plan to have been actually contemplated, we must necessarily conclude that Bonaparte was determined to preserve the peace upon the Continent as long as there was any hope of success. If, on the other hand, we are certain that everything was a sham to permit the assembling of troops intended for a continental war, we will conceive the First Consul to be sowing the seed for such a conflict as early as 1803.

The evidence on the basis of which it has been endeavored to prove that Bonaparte did not intend to invade England can be grouped about two main points: the supposed impracticability of the project and the testimony of contemporaries regarding his

plans and utterances. The difficulties of the attempt should of course not be minimized, and that Bonaparte himself was finally aware of them cannot be doubted, but to conclude that it was both impracticable and impossible is judging too much from the issue of events.

A number of authorities, although admitting the feasibility of the plan, still doubt whether it was really intended for execution. They point to numerous statements made by Napoleon and some of his most astute contemporaries to the effect that the sole purpose of the preparations on the Channel were to harass England and collect an army without alarming the Continent. The fact that he declared a descent impossible in 1797, when the Directory wanted to place its execution in his hands, is repeatedly cited as proof that he never had any faith in it. But when one considers the contrast between the corrupt administration of the Directory and the incomparably more efficient one of the Consulate, the argument that what was impossible in 1797 must have been so in 1803 falls to the ground. Another piece of evidence which has been much emphasized is the affirmation of Metternich that when he accompanied the Emperor on a visit to Cambrai in 1810, the latter replied to his (Metternich's) declaration that he had never believed in the sincerity of the project:

You are very right; never would I have been such a fool as to make a descent upon England, unless, indeed, a revolution had broken out in that country. The army assembled at Boulogne was always an army against Austria. I could not place it anywhere else without giving suspicions about my intentions, and being obliged to form it somewhere, I did so at Boulogne, where it could, whilst collecting, also disquiet England.¹

According to this description of his policy it took Bonaparte two years before he finally succeeded in forcing war upon Austria. One can conceive his playing a part for even so long a period; such a colossal bluff would have been very much to his taste. But that for this he should nearly ruin his finances and

¹ *Memoirs*, I, 28.

strain France to the utmost is not within the compass of reason. Probably the First Consul did have a double purpose in mind from the beginning. If the plan of descent should fail in execution, the bad effect of the fiasco might be erased from the popular mind by a victory over England's friends upon the Continent. Such a course, however, always maintained its alternative character. To humble England was always the primary object of his policy, for he saw only too well that the position of France would never be consolidated while England was stifling her commerce, capturing her colonies, and subsidizing her foes.

The ingenuity and vastness of conception which characterize the evolution of the great project are in fact the best arguments for the sincerity of Bonaparte's intentions. From the month of the break with England it occupied the greater share of his attention, and not even with the commencement of the war in Germany was it definitely abandoned. One must not think, of course, that a single continuous and consistent plan was held in mind throughout; nor was the project regarded at all times with the same enthusiasm and confidence. Difficulties and altered circumstances involved continual changes. It is precisely here that we find its importance for the history of Napoleonic diplomacy, for with each major alteration in the fortunes of the invasion project, the policy of the First Consul and Emperor was profoundly affected.

The first plan embraced by the First Consul was the crossing of the Channel on some dark night by means of flat-bottom boats. Modern researches, notably those of Édouard Desbrière, have shown conclusively that the crossing by such an unprotected flotilla would have been hazardous to the point of madness. One must consider that Bonaparte's acquaintance with the sea was limited to his own Mediterranean, and that he had no true conception of the nature of the ribbon of water which separated England from the Continent. He therefore threw himself into the task with all the amateur's enthusiasm, collecting immense numbers of flat-boats at Boulogne and in Holland. In England the consternation was extreme. Malmsbury's diaries

and correspondence show conclusively that long before the renewal of war, prominent Englishmen, such as Pitt, Addington, Hawkesbury, and Canning, were convinced that Bonaparte would attempt an invasion as the only means of conquering England. Immediately upon the commencement of hostilities the defense was organized with feverish activity. Dumouriez came to London at the suggestion of Nelson and commenced to draw up long memoranda on how an invasion should be met.² The gentry assisted in the organization and training of the militia, and Pitt himself took his turn at playing soldier. The government itself was probably less apprehensive than it pretended to be, but it realized very well that the popular panic was the best inducement for a vigorous prosecution of the war.

By the end of 1803 the First Consul began to have doubts about the feasibility of crossing with the flotilla alone, in regard to which his admirals had long been making representations. But the project was not one to be easily renounced; the millions of francs spent upon the preparations and the clamor and publicity with which it had been heralded made a precipitate retreat impossible. In a letter to Admiral Ganteaume of December 7 we hear for the first time of an alteration in the plan by which the crossing of the flotilla was to take place in combination with the operations of the fleets of the Republic on the high seas.³ The chief difficulty lay in the fact that the French naval forces were scattered in the Atlantic and Mediterranean ports, where they lay blockaded by British squadrons. To combine two or more of these fleets and bring them into the Channel without attracting the enemy's attention was indeed the task of a great strategist. Bonaparte's plan hinged on convincing the British that he intended to cross with the flotilla alone. He would then maneuver his fleets in such a manner that they would expect an attack in some distant quarter, such as Egypt or the West Indies, and, when their attention was fully focused elsewhere, his

² Cf. Broadley and Rose, *Dumouriez and the Defence of England against Napoleon* (1909).

³ *Corr.*, IX, no. 7399.

admirals would suddenly appear with a considerably superior force in the Channel.⁴

The first detailed plan on the principles outlined above is found in instructions issued in the spring of 1804 to Admiral Latouche-Tréville, the commander of the Toulon squadron and the best naval officer France possessed. The operations of the fleet were divided into three stages. In the first of these Latouche was to escape with ten ships from Toulon and, after deceiving Nelson as to his destination, rally Admiral Villeneuve's five vessels at Rochefort. In the second stage the combined fleets were to set sail and make for a predetermined cruising point, calculated to be one from which a good wind could easily carry them into the Channel in such a fashion as to avoid the fleet of Cornwallis before Brest, the only dangerous encounter possible. Finally, the fleets were to enter the Channel, though passing near enough to the harbor of Cherbourg to permit of a boat's being sent out with any supplementary instructions considered necessary.⁵

During the spring Bonaparte's desire for a speedy execution of his plans had been heightened by the proofs he received of British efforts to gain allies on the Continent. In February Parliament had been asked for a grant of five million pounds for "secret service money." That these funds were intended to subsidize continental allies was self-evident. The expectations of the First Consul were, however, doomed to disappointment, for not until July was sufficient progress made to enable the Toulon fleet to anticipate an early sailing. With fiery enthusiasm Napoleon, now Emperor, wrote to his admiral: "I desire greatly that the operation which you are going to undertake will put me in a position to raise you to such consideration and honors as

⁴ The ruse of a passage with the flat bottoms alone was what convinced so many contemporaries, like Metternich, Lucchesini, and Archduke Charles, that everything was a sham. For the same reason the British government and naval men were so little disturbed.

⁵ The instructions are undated, but Desbrière, who gives them in full, assigns them to May. *Projets et tentatives de débarquement aux îles britanniques, 1793-1805*, IV, 3-8.

you can possibly wish for. Let us be masters of the Straits for six hours and we will be masters of the world.”⁶ But luck in naval affairs was never the lot of Napoleon, for Latouche-Tréville, the only admiral in whom he had any real confidence, died in August. With his death the descent project entered a stage which has been characterized as a “*période d’abandon*” by Desbrière. Throughout the fall of 1804 activity was suspended; Desbrière even maintains the probability that the plan was given up entirely.⁷ At any rate, some time would have to elapse before a new commander could be selected and made acquainted with his fleet. The natural political effect of this situation was that Napoleon turned more to the Continent, and in the fall of 1804 we find a noticeable increase of tension there.

The position of England throughout the Napoleonic wars very much resembles that of France in that her chief problem lay in finding a way to deal decisive blows to her enemy. The navy, the arm in which England far outshone her traditional rival, was of use mainly as a defensive weapon. After picking up the scattered French colonies and sweeping the seas of French commerce, the great task remaining for the fleets of the island kingdom was the defense of the British coasts against a possible plan of descent. But wars cannot be won by measures of defense alone and the Revolution had already taught the British statesmen the course they were to follow. France could be defeated only by allies upon the Continent or by the overthrow of her government by interior forces. The lack of initiative of the Addington cabinet is nowhere shown more glaringly than in the neglect of the former means. It must be realized, however, that the task was not so easy as it had been during the Revolution. The powers which had then made up the coalitions had had cause on more than one occasion to regret their British connection. The feeling that Britain was the real disturber of the European peace and that she always allowed others to fight her battles was by

⁶ July 2, 1804. *Corr.*, IX, no. 7832.

⁷ Desbrière, *Projets et tentatives*, IV, 339.

no means a new one. It was therefore necessary for the Court of St. James to step carefully and avoid ostentatious display of the true objectives of its policy. "I have been particularly cautious," wrote Paget from Vienna a month before the outbreak of war, "in never having allowed an expression to escape me which could by any means be construed into a wish for what is vulgarly denominated 'drawing this country into war.' " And he went on to express his opinion that no overtures would be favorably listened to by Austria until she felt herself exposed to some pressing danger. When that moment arose, the overtures would surely come from her.⁸

Greater energy was shown by the British government in making use of the second means at its command to bring the war to a successful conclusion. Bonaparte once overthrown, France might sink into an anarchy worse than that of the Directory. The elements inclined to conspiracy were easily to be found, both inside and out of France. Except during the earliest period of the Revolution, England had been the headquarters of the émigrés, particularly of those groups which were most disposed to violence and intrigue. In spite of the continued urgings and representations of the First Consul, they had been little disturbed during the period of peace. Realizing that the eventual renewal of war was almost inevitable, the British government may have looked upon them as reserve forces to be called upon when the conflict should again break out. Their chief center of activity was at Edinburgh, the residence of the Comte d'Artois. There they were observed by agents sent from London by Andréossy, who reported regularly and minutely upon their goings and comings.⁹

Bonaparte never underrated the danger which threatened from émigré conspiracies. The royalist movement itself was nearly dead in as far as it touched the great mass of Frenchmen, but the insecurity of the life of the chief magistrate of

⁸ To Hawkesbury, April 19, 1803. *Paget Papers*, II, 76.

⁹ The reports of Andréossy's emissaries are found in A E., ANGLETERRE, 600, nos. 66, 110, 127, 146, 164.

the Republic and the baneful influence which the exiles exercised upon the policy of foreign courts were serious disadvantages to France. With the development of the idea of the re-establishment of monarchy in his person, a possible renunciation of the Bourbon claims acquired additional value.

On July 25, 1803, there appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* an account of an attempt by the First Consul to secure from Louis XVIII, through the medium of Prussia, the renunciation of his pretensions to the throne of France. Bonaparte later denied that he had made any direct overtures, claiming that he merely received favorably certain suggestions made by Prussia. Bignon believes that the origin of the whole affair lay in a conversation which he had with Haugwitz on January 17, in which the Prussian minister suggested that the Bourbons be given a pension.¹⁰ The truth of the matter is that overtures toward the same end were made simultaneously at Paris and Berlin. The Prussian government, stimulated by Russia, had touched upon the matter in 1802, and Talleyrand had spoken of it to Markov. He then took up the question with the Prussian ambassador. Motivated by the desire to strengthen his government and compassion for the Bourbon princes, the First Consul would be glad to grant them a pension provided they promised to accept no further financial support from other governments and agreed to retire to an asylum more distant than Warsaw — Moscow, for example. This arrangement might receive some kind of sanction or guarantee from Prussia and Russia. Lucchesini believed to perceive from Talleyrand's remarks that the First Consul would long ago have demanded the removal of Louis from the Prussian dominions if he had not feared to offend the court of Berlin. The ambassador's report arrived in Berlin on January 18, the day after Haugwitz had made similar suggestions to Bignon.¹¹ Without further hesitation

¹⁰ L. P. Bignon, *Histoire de France depuis le 18 brumaire jusqu'à la paix de Tilsitt, 1er Époque* (1829), III, 278-298.

¹¹ Lucchesini's report of January 10 is given entire by Bailleu, "Napoleons Verhandlungen mit den Bourbons, 1803," *Historische Zeitschrift*, LXXIV, 447-449.

Frederick William now decided to act. One might well be surprised at his interest in the question. A little light is thrown upon his attitude by some remarks of Otto, now minister at Munich, in a dispatch to Talleyrand. After declaring that the King of Prussia is the only monarch in Europe who sincerely favors the new order in France, Otto adds: J.S. . JS.

He believes that the prosperity of his country depends on the solidity of our government; he regards the Bourbons as his personal enemies; he expresses his wishes for the heredity of the governing power concentrated in the hands of the First Consul. If M. de Lucchesini has already spoken to you in this sense, he has been the faithful interpreter of the King, who does not neglect any occasion to communicate his sentiments to those princes who, like the Elector, have his confidence.¹²

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The overtures made through Meyer, president of the South Prussian Chamber at Warsaw, were, however, doomed to failure.¹³ Influenced perhaps by the approaching break between France and England, Louis and his advisers decided to refuse Bonaparte's offer. Having once arrived at this resolution, they considered it advantageous to make known their position with all the éclat and publicity possible. In vain did the Prussian monarch, anxious to avoid new animosities, represent how this would irritate the government at Paris, pleading that the answer be transmitted through him. But it was hardly likely that the Bourbons would show any consideration for the man who sat in their place. On February 28 Louis issued a declaration, which was countersigned by the Duc d'Enghien, then residing with his uncle at Warsaw: "*Fils de Saint Louis, je saurai, à son exemple, me respecter jusque dans les fers. Successeur de François Ier, je veux du moins pouvoir dire comme lui: nous avons tout perdu, hors l'honneur.*"¹⁴

The gage was thus thrown down between Bonaparte and the Bourbons. The renewal of war intensified the hatred between

¹² 14 floréal an XII (May 4, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 77.

¹³ Meyer's instructions are given in P. M. Desmarest, *Quinze ans de haute police sous le Consulat et l'Empire* (1899), pp. 274-281.

¹⁴ The full text is given in *ibid.*, p. 282.

them, for the danger of intrigue and conspiracy was thereby immeasurably increased. Artois came down to London, made a great display of activity, and gathered the most violent spirits about him. The royalist party was split into two groups, each finding its leadership in one of the brothers of Louis XVI. Each of the princes had his own council, which censured and interfered with the other's plans; each had agents in France who neither coöperated nor communicated with one another.

Besides the royalists there were several other groups upon whom the British government might count for assistance in undermining the Consular government. The name "Jacobin" at this period usually covers those who had taken part in the more extreme phases of the Revolution; they were largely held together by a common hatred of Bonaparte, whom they regarded as a tyrant. They exercised little influence, but counted among their number several forceful personalities who were regarded as dangerous enemies by the First Consul. A more influential but less dangerous group were the philosophic republicans, whose headquarters were in the salons of Madame de Staël and Madame Condercet. It counted such literary lights as Benjamin Constant and Claude Fauriel, while a rapidly diminishing number still maintained themselves in the legislative bodies, such as Sieyès, Carnot, and Garat.

By far the greatest opposition to the Consular government was still to be found in the ranks of the army. It furnished not only the most irreconcilably republican elements, but also the principal potential rivals to the First Consul himself. Moreau, Bernadotte, Augereau, Brune, Jourdan, and Masséna were all on bad terms with Bonaparte, decried the ever more pronounced trend toward monarchy, and refused to recognize any superior claims on his part to leadership. "There is not a general in the army who does not believe that he has the same rights to the throne as myself," the Emperor was later to declare.¹⁵ During the Consulate and Empire a multitude of military conspiracies were unearthed, but they were usually hushed up by Bonaparte,

¹⁵ Chaptal, *Mes souvenirs sur Napoléon*, p. 250.

who felt that he could not afford to have the loyalty of his troops brought into question.

Thus, while Napoleon's own military taste and spirit are reflected in all of his civil institutions — his diplomacy, his administration, and his court — he resisted a social and political order in which a professional army aspired to the dominating rôle in the state. After Luneville he leaned more and more to the practice of sending his generals on diplomatic missions, thereby keeping the most easily disaffected beyond the reach of intrigue. By 1803 his position had become infinitely more firm at home, but the renewal of the war with England again endangered the stability of his government. Of the great leaders of the revolutionary armies who might have claimed to rival him, all but Bernadotte and Moreau were either dead or in exile. The former remained the hope of the Jacobins; he had his finger in every military conspiracy of the Consulate, and only his intimacy with his brother-in-law, Joseph Bonaparte, saved him on several occasions.¹⁶ Moreau held himself more and more aloof, and the royalists began to look upon him as a potential convert. But the victor of Hohenlinden was weak and short-sighted, and Bonaparte would probably have ignored him altogether if he had not been so convenient a figurehead for the disaffected. In 1804 he was to become the center of the Anglo-royalist effort to bring about the overthrow of the Consular government.

¹⁶ É. Guillon, *Les complots militaires sous le Consulat et l'Empire* (1894), p. 35; Pingaud, *Bernadotte, Napoléon et les Bourbons, 1797-1844* (1901), p. 61.

PART III
THE BIRTH OF THE EMPIRE

CHAPTER XII

THE TRAGEDY OF VINCENNES — FRANCE AND RUSSIA

THOUGH the influence of the execution of the Duc d'Enghien on the career of Napoleon Bonaparte has often been exaggerated, there can be no doubt but that it made a profound impression upon him and his contemporaries. "Two actions, both evil," says Chateaubriand, "commenced and brought on his fall; the death of the Duc d'Enghien, the war in Spain. . . . As long as he attacked anarchy and the foreign enemies of France, he was victorious; he found himself deprived of his vigor as soon as he entered the path of evil."¹ We may not go so far as to echo this outburst of the great romanticist. Yet the evidence that this act turned from Napoleon many of his fellow men and left a scar on his own soul is too weighty to be denied. In how far it affected the diplomatic relations of the time it is difficult to determine, but it was at least the nominal cause for serious complications. Since it served as the occasion for the break with Russia, we must give it more attention than would otherwise be necessary.

With the renewal of war between France and Great Britain, the Consular government prepared itself for a marked increase in the activity of émigré conspirators and British agents. The ambassadors and ministers of the Republic were reminded for the hundredth time of the necessity for keeping track of the activities of the more notorious personages who might be suspected of harboring plots against France. Early in June there arrived in Paris a report from the chargé d'affaires at Munich, Marandet, with an interesting commentary concerning the resident British minister, Drake. Marandet pointed out that Drake had already been remarked for intrigues in Italy and that his mission at Munich was subject to justifiable suspicion: "Having

¹ M. Dreyfus, comp., *Napoléon raconté par Chateaubriand* (1904), p. 12.

nothing to do at Munich, I must assume that he had contingent instructions for the neighborhood, and I recall that he arrived at Munich about the same time that Mr. Moore appeared on the frontier of Switzerland." Both the Elector and Montgelas promised to keep an eye on the British minister, Montgelas remarking that it was fortunate that Drake had been assigned to a court friendly to France.²

To lead on the suspected envoy and then to publish his perfidy, if such there be, to all the world was a procedure which the Consular police found much to its taste. The operations were connected with a creature of Fouché's, Méhée de la Touche, who was already in England when war broke out. Méhée had been editor of Fouché's *Journal des hommes libres*, but had fallen under the displeasure of the First Consul. Escaping from detention at Oleron, he made his way to England, where he soon wormed his way sufficiently into the confidence of the ministry to secure letters of introduction to a number of British envoys on the Continent. In September, 1803, we find him in Munich, and soon he was able to transmit to the French police enough evidence to convict Drake before all the world of initiating a conspiracy against the French government. The British minister at Stuttgart, Spencer Smith, proved equally gullible, falling a victim to the wiles of another French agent. In an astonishingly short time 130,000 francs and sufficient correspondence to incriminate him several times over had been wormed from the unsuspecting envoy.³

In France meanwhile events had also been moving rapidly. More or less by accident the police had stumbled on to the fact that Pichegru, Cadoudal, and a large number of other royalists had disembarked from British cruisers and had been staying quietly at Paris for several months. Their apprehension was but the matter of a few weeks; on interrogation, Cadoudal admitted

² Talleyrand, 9 prairial an XI (May 29, 1803). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 179, no. 122.

³ The materials touching on the dealings of the French agents with Drake and Smith are found under *Württemberg* and *Bavière* in the archives of the Foreign Affairs Ministry. The limitations of this study prevent their fuller exploitation here.

that a prince of the House of Bourbon was to enter France the moment the "abduction" of the First Consul had succeeded. The first measure now taken was naturally to inquire which of the Bourbon princes had left his place of residence. Louis XVIII and the Duc d'Angoulême were at Warsaw, while Artois, Berry, Orleans, and the Princes of Bourbon and Condé were at London. Only the Duc d'Enghien was anywhere near the French frontier, and the report concerning him naturally arrived first. It seems that the First Consul had been entirely unaware of his residence at Ettenheim; Massias, the minister at Carlsruhe, had spoken of it casually in one of his reports, but Talleyrand had apparently not taken note of it. Bonaparte was thus somewhat startled when the report of the police officer detached to investigate the prince's residence arrived from Strasbourg. The individual in question seems to have understood very little German. On being told about the officers of the prince's entourage, he had, among others, taken down the names Dumouriez and Smith. So the First Consul received the impression that Enghien was lying in wait on the Rhine with a full staff of officers, directed by Dumouriez and an English commissioner by the name of Smith. "Am I a dog," he cried, "who can be knocked on the head in the street, while my murderers are sacred beings?" And of Talleyrand he demanded: "What is M. Massias doing at Carlsruhe while there are armed gatherings of my enemies at Ettenheim?"⁴

Orders were given for the dispatch of a small body of troops from Strasbourg, and on the fifteenth of March the Duke was arrested and carried off to Paris.⁵ It was now very mortifying to discover in the English Colonel Smith an old German captain by the name of Schmidt, while the supposed Dumouriez turned out to be an emigrant marquis, Thumery. There was no positive proof of any kind that Enghien was connected with the conspiracy just discovered. It is useless to argue again the question

⁴ Desmarest, *Quinze ans de haute police*, p. 120.

⁵ The various instructions relating to the arrest of Enghien are found in *Carr.*, IX, nos. 7608, 7610, 7615.

as to who must bear the greatest blame for the execution. Like all important measures of the French government, it was the result of the direct decision of the First Consul, and he never hesitated to take upon himself the full responsibility for the act. It is not for us to excuse or condemn the action from a moral point of view; what is here important is its motivation and political consequences.

In the opinion of Welschinger, the foremost student of the question, the result which Bonaparte aspired to and actually succeeded in attaining was the general consent to the establishment of the Empire. The timid feared his anger if they manifested the slightest opposition, the ambitious hoped to benefit by the institution of a new order of things, and those who dreaded a royalist restoration no longer had to fear that Bonaparte would adopt the rôle of General Monk.⁶ The latter point in particular has often been emphasized, yet it is perhaps the least reasonable of all. It is based principally upon the fact that Talleyrand and Fouché urged the execution from this standpoint, holding that Bonaparte should prove himself the defender of the Revolution.⁷ Yet, was it necessary to outrage all Europe in order to prove something which ought to have been patent to everyone? Was not the institution of the Empire in itself a sufficient guarantee that Bonaparte would never recall the Bourbons? One can hardly believe that the First Consul could have allowed himself to be led by such arguments, though he may have grasped at them as at straws to salve his conscience and to justify an act which he felt to be as necessary as it was cruel. The assumption that the execution was intended to impress people with the fact that the First Consul was not to be resisted is hardly more reasonable, though it undoubtedly did have some such effect. "This event," says a police report of

⁶ H. Welschinger, *Le Pape et l'Empereur, 1804-1815* (1905), p. 15.

⁷ Both Michaud and Chateaubriand affirm that they saw the original of a letter of Talleyrand to the First Consul of March 8, 1804, in which he urged the execution of Enghien for the above reason. This document disappeared from the archives in 1822. Welschinger, *Le duc d'Enghien. L'enlèvement d'Ettenheim et l'exécution de Vincennes* (1913), p. 420.

those days, "is regarded as a grand coup d'état, which proves that the government knows how to reach its enemies wherever they may be."⁸ Yet Bonaparte lost the affection and respect of many worthy persons; Chateaubriand quitted his service, and Hauterive for a moment thought of doing the same. "This event," said Bresson, "will make people think of the Bourbons, and some day it will serve their cause."⁹

The basic motive for the execution, however, lay in the desperate determination of the First Consul to put an end to the continual conspiracies against his person. He expressed this with force to the Vice-President of the Senate, M. Le Couteulx, when that functionary called upon him at La Malmaison to inquire when he would receive the senatorial address offering him the hereditary crown of France. In the course of a long conversation the First Consul remarked that he would have been happy to save Enghien, but that it had been necessary to show the Bourbons, the cabinet of London, and all the courts of Europe that it was no child's play to plot his assassination.¹⁰

The execution of the Duc d'Enghien can be reckoned among the political blunders of Bonaparte's career. He certainly lost a great deal of prestige and popularity, particularly outside of France. As an explanation for the formation of the Third Coalition, however, the importance of the affair has been exaggerated. The Russians used it as a convenient excuse for a hostility which they had already ceased to take the trouble to hide. The claim that Enghien's death brought about the breaking off of the Franco-Prussian alliance negotiations also lacks trustworthy evidence. There can be no shadow of a doubt but that Prussia had already been considering this action for two months preceding the unhappy event. Haugwitz's memoir of March 30, in which he proposed the declarations he made four

⁸ Report of the Prefecture of Police of March 23, 1803. Aulard, *Paris sous le Consulat*, IV, 732.

⁹ Artaud de Montor, *Histoire de la vie et des travaux politiques du comte d'Hauterive* (1839), p. 114.

¹⁰ Notes of M. Le Couteulx, an XII. A.E., ANGLETERRE, supplément 15, no. 86.

days later to Laforest, does not mention the affair; it is entirely absent from among the many arguments with which he justifies his advice.¹¹

On the other hand, there is plenty of evidence to show that the execution had the worst possible psychological effect. Laforest was deserted by the society of Potsdam. The Queen urged that the court put on mourning, but the King refused to accede to her request. At the other courts, excepting Sweden and Russia, the behavior was similar. Austria took no heed of the matter, Cobenzl assuring Champagny that he understood how necessity often required strong measures.¹² The day on which the news of Enghien's seizure arrived at Vienna Paget had an audience with the Vice-Chancellor and informed him that "King George would see with pleasure any steps that His Imperial Majesty might in his wisdom take for the release of that unhappy prince." He also presented a note on the subject, but Cobenzl replied that, as the matter regarded the Emperor only in his capacity as chief of the Empire, he could take no step without consulting the Diet. The evasion was so pointed that the ambassador became nettled and expressed ". . . his uneasiness and dissatisfaction upon the very slight degree of confidence which had for some time existed between the two countries, and that he could not help attributing it to a want of confidence on the part of this government." Cobenzl resented these remarks, and the dispute waxed hot. When the Vice-Chancellor insinuated that England was trying to start a continental war, Paget vehemently denied it, but declared that the three courts (England, Austria, and Russia) ought to come to an agreement on the "best mode of checking the evil before it became too great," and that it was up to Austria to make the first propositions to the others, as the Enghien case concerned her most nearly. To this tirade Cobenzl replied that it ". . . was a wise system not to talk before the means of supporting your

¹¹ Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 167.

¹² Champagny to Talleyrand, 4 pluviôse an XII (Jan. 24, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 374, no. 136.

language were proved to exist; that Austria was not in a situation to go to war." "I made no more impression than if I had addressed myself to the winds," concludes the report of the raging ambassador.¹³

Of the lesser courts, those of the Bourbon monarchs showed the least perturbation concerning the execution. The Spanish king remarked that it was too bad Enghien had to compromise himself in such a manner, and Godoy told the French ambassador, Beurnonville, that "spoilt blood had to be blotted out wherever one found it."¹⁴ The King of Naples resisted the pressure put upon him to adopt mourning, and his ambassador, the Count di Gallo, went to a ball which Talleyrand had the courage to give.¹⁵

It remained for Gustavus IV of Sweden to make up in violence for the complacency of the others. This northern Don Quixote prided himself upon being the champion of the old order in Europe. Everything that partook of a revolutionary nature was anathema to Gustavus, whose eccentricity, moreover, would never tolerate any dissimulation of his real sentiments. His relations with the French Republic had therefore never been very good, in spite of the fact that the First Consul would have been only too glad to renew the traditional connection between the two countries.

During the winter of 1804-1805 Gustavus was making a tour of South Germany, where his capricious conduct soon made him very unwelcome to his relatives of the houses of Bavaria and Baden. Finding the King of Sweden so near the French borders, Bonaparte had considered the opportunity a favorable one for drawing him into his political system. Otto was instructed at length on the line of conversation he was to pursue with Gustavus and his ministers. He was to speak of the historic alliance between France and Sweden, their common interests, and the

¹³ To Hawkesbury, April 2, 1803. *Paget Papers*, II, 103-110.

¹⁴ Blennerhassett, *Talleyrand*, p. 362.

¹⁵ Luccchesini's report of March 24, 1803. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 166.

necessity of a close concert if the latter were to play a rôle in Europe.

It is necessary [emphasized Talleyrand] that your discourse be an indication of the dispositions of the First Consul, and that he [the King] will draw therefrom the conclusion that if he makes a proposition of alliance to you, it will be received with favor, and that it will not be rejected as it was by the Directoral government.¹⁶

Otto did, in fact, succeed in conveying the sentiments of his government to the Swedes. Besides Gustavus, he spoke at length with his ministers, Lagerbiel and General Armfeld, both of whom expressed themselves in favor of a renewal of the traditional bonds. The chief hindrance, said they, lay in the fact that France was dropping Turkey, as well as in the general lack of faith in the stability of the French government. The King admired Bonaparte personally, but he was absolutely devoted to the principle of hereditary rule. Both of the ministers expressed their apprehension of Russian views upon Finland. Armfeld suggested that France send an agent to Carlsruhe, the next stopover in the royal itinerary, to make the proposition of an alliance to the King there.¹⁷

The project of a renewed connection between France and Sweden was thus fairly advanced, when the news of the affair of Ettenheim reached Carlsruhe. Gustavus was beside himself with rage; in the presence of a large number of persons, including the French minister, he loudly declared that the seizure of Enghien was an open violation of international law and that he would demand his release.¹⁸ The presence of Gustavus at the capital of Baden was exceedingly embarrassing to the Elector, who felt it necessary to apologize for his guest's tirade to Massias. When the news of the execution became known, the King made a display of his sentiments by adopting Enghien's

¹⁶ 5 nivôse an XII (Dec. 26, 1803). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 179, no. 200.

¹⁷ Otto to Talleyrand, 15 nivôse an XII (Jan. 8, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 3.

¹⁸ Massias to Talleyrand, 27 ventôse an XII (March 19, 1804). A.E., BADEN, 6, no. 50.

dog, which he took every opportunity to caress in the presence of the whole court.¹⁹ A demand for the prince's will was submitted to the French government, but Talleyrand replied with a note which bluntly told the Swedes to mind their own business. All chance for renewing the traditional accord thus passed away.

But it was Russia who made the affair of Ettenheim a matter of international importance. The relations with France, already cooling before the rupture of the Peace of Amiens, had since taken on an air of ill-disguised hostility. The Tsar had protested vigorously against the occupation of Naples and indicated his disapproval of that of Hanover. The First Consul's suggestion for a general arbitration by Alexander was not accepted, but Russia continued to express her willingness to undertake the mediation between France and England. After some hesitation, the latter power had, in a note drawn up by Hawkesbury on June 27, indicated its readiness to submit the dispute to Russian mediation. But the First Consul was no longer so conciliatory as in the days preceding the rupture. Most of the harm which England was capable of inflicting upon France was already done. The commerce of the Republic had been swept off the seas, and her colonies were doomed to eventual conquest. Yet the colonial empire of France had sunk so greatly in value since the sale of Louisiana and the failure of the Santo Domingan expedition, that what was left no longer justified sacrifices regarding her continental interests. The occupation of Hanover and Naples, moreover, offered the First Consul opportunities for the extension of his sphere of influence of which he was not slow to take advantage. Thus the concessions which he had been ready to make to preserve peace now seemed to outweigh the advantages of its restoration.

On July 6 Talleyrand addressed a letter to Markov. Hawkesbury's note, said he, showed that no positive response on the proposition of arbitration was to be expected from Great Britain. Let the questions touched upon in *Whitworth's ultimatum* be

¹⁹ Otto to Talleyrand, 27 messidor an XII (July 16, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 117.

submitted to the Emperor of Russia; France would evacuate Hanover, and England should restore the captured French and Dutch merchant vessels. The minister of the exterior frankly expressed his conviction that he had little hope for the success of the mediation.²⁰ His suggestion that the discussion be limited to the matters touched upon in Whitworth's final ultimatum was, in effect, refused by the British cabinet. Hawkesbury intimated that a large part of his sovereign's grievance against France had lain in French aggressions against certain continental states. The conduct of the government of the Republic during the period of peace, as well as since the renewal of war, ought to prove that it was necessary to place a barrier before its insatiable ambition by establishing the peace of Europe on more general and extended bases than those which had been adopted to terminate the last war. Talleyrand protested loudly against the language and meaning of this exposition. He called attention to the fact that the ultimatum of Whitworth had dealt with the affairs of Switzerland, of Holland, of the compensation of the King of Sardinia, and of the other affairs of Italy. What was it then that Britain wanted to add to these bases? Did she mean to bring into the discussion the left bank of the Rhine and Belgium? ²¹

Driault considers this indignation simulated. He maintains that the First Consul and Talleyrand wanted merely to throw the responsibility of the war upon England; that while the latter had decided upon war, she did not necessarily wish to upset the arrangements of the Peace of Luneville and limit France to her ancient frontiers.²² Yet, one must ask, just what else did the British mean by their demand for a wider basis for the discussion? It was just this kind of restriction of the Republic which cabinet ministers and prominent personalities were speaking of at London in those days.

In August a project for a preliminary convention between

²⁰ A.E., RUSSIE, 142, no. 181.

²¹ To Markov, 4 thermidor an XI (July 23, 1804). A.E., RUSSIE, 142, no. 208.

²² Driault, *Napoléon et l'Europe: la politique extérieure*, p. 453.

France and England arrived at Paris from St. Petersburg. It was accompanied by a rescript of the Tsar's in which each point was argued in detail. According to the terms of the suggested arrangement Malta was to be returned to the Knights of St. John with a Russian garrison for ten years; England would receive Lampedusa; the independence and neutrality in time of war of the Italian, Ligurian, Ionian, Helvetian, and Batavian republics were to be guaranteed; Naples, Etruria, Sardinia, and the states of the Holy Roman Empire were to be equally neutral; and the Ottoman Empire would be assured of its integrity.²³

These conditions did not differ greatly from what Bonaparte had been willing to concede during the final stage of the negotiations with Whitworth, and they seemed so reasonable to Hédouville that he considered them in accord with the views of his chief.²⁴ There was no question of the ancient limits of France, nor even of the natural frontiers, for Piedmont was still left to her. One can well doubt the First Consul's pacific intentions when he now not only refused all discussion on this basis, but rejected the mediation entirely. And yet, when one considers his personal position, it is not difficult to understand how such a settlement was impossible for him. It would have involved an essential retreat from the positions assumed since the Peace of Luneville, would have admitted the right of Britain to claim a voice in every step taken in future on the Continent, would have limited, in fine, all activity of an expansive character. France would have been forced to accept the position she had always claimed the natural boundaries would impose upon her, and would, almost alone among the European nations, have announced the final accomplishment of her national destiny.

But even these considerations did not influence the decision of the First Consul so much as the fear that by such a sub-

²³ *Projet d'articles préliminaires pour une pacification entre la France et l'Angleterre*; Rescript of Alexander to Markov, July 17, 1803. A.E., RUSSIE, 142, nos. 105, 186. (The former document is out of place in the dossier.)

²⁴ To Talleyrand, 8 vendémiaire an XII (Sept. 30, 1803). *Ibid.*, 143, no. 5.

mission his prestige would be forever compromised. Throughout his career Bonaparte feared a loss of dignity more than the armies of Europe; what he might have granted to avoid an unprofitable war, he could not concede to win a humiliating peace. On August 23 he made his decision known to Talleyrand. To give the English Lampedusa would be as bad as giving Malta; it would be as dishonorable to France as the occupation of Gibraltar was to Spain; he would never treat with England on the affairs of the Continent; Holland and Switzerland would be evacuated, but to stipulate it in the treaty would be humiliating.²⁵ On August 29 Talleyrand wrote to Hédouville:

The First Consul cannot comprehend how the cabinet of St. Petersburg can reply to an overture so generous as that which he made to the Emperor of Russia with so partial a project of conciliation. He has decided to shun the mediation as uncertain in its object and illusory in its results. A mediation must have bases; the English do not wish any. . . . We realize very well that in this project the interests of England are well protected, and they have gone even further in this regard than Lord Whitworth in his ultimatum, but we would have to undergo terrible defeats before we would thus accept our dishonor.²⁶

No further hope of a successful mediation thus remained, and the failure of the project only served to increase the ill feeling between France and Russia. At St. Petersburg the anti-French bias of the court was steadily becoming more pronounced. Even before the rupture with England, Hédouville had been convinced that almost the entire entourage of the Tsar had been gained by British gold.²⁷ Alexander was certainly pacifically inclined, but the constant pressure was bound to influence him in the end. Yet down to the close of 1803 there remained an inconsistency in his attitude and that of his ministers. "It has been marked here," reports Otto from Munich in late November, "that there is a striking contradiction between the

²⁵ *Corr.*, VIII, nos. 7032, 7033, 7034.

²⁶ A.E., RUSSIE, 142, 230.

²⁷ To Talleyrand, 29 germinal an XII (April 19, 1803). *Sbornik*, LXXVII, 97-98.

communications of the Prince and those of his ministry." ²⁸ It was on this score that the First Consul and Talleyrand justified the refusal to accept the mediation instead of the arbitration of Alexander.

The arbitration would have been the work of the Emperor [wrote Talleyrand to Champagny], the mediation would be the work of the cabinet of St. Petersburg. The First Consul would repose himself entirely on the just and enlightened spirit of the Emperor, but what confidence can he have in the Cabinet? ²⁹

Bonaparte was especially resentful against Markov, whom he suspected of a desire to estrange the two countries. The ambassador was frequently discourteous and belligerent, even exceeding his instructions in his hostility to the French government.³⁰ Once, when told that his language and conduct were not in accordance with the wishes of his sovereign, he impudently declared: "The Tsar may have his opinion, but the Russians have their own." ³¹ In July the First Consul had asked for his recall; now that the Russian mediation had favored the British viewpoint, all his resentment turned against the ambassador. Invited to a state dinner at the Tuileries, Markov was treated to a tirade à la Whitworth in which even the restoration of Poland was touched upon. The ambassador was now happy to unite his request for his recall to that of the First Consul. He knew himself to be watched and feared the discovery of his relations with certain clerks in the Ministry of War.³² So, while Alexander pretended great surprise when Hédouville submitted the complaints of the First Consul,³³ the recall of the envoy was decided upon. The form in which this was carried out, however, hardly tended to improve the relations between Paris and St.

²⁸ 9 frimaire an XII (Nov. 30, 1803). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 179, no. 182.

²⁹ 11 vendémiaire an XII (Oct. 1, 1803). A.E., AUTRICHE, 373, no. 6.

³⁰ An excellent, though somewhat colored, characterization of Markov is given by Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution française*, VI, 161-162.

³¹ Talleyrand to Laforest, Oct. 4, 1803. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 139.

³² Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution française*, VI, 321.

³³ *Corr.*, VIII, nos. 6957, 7032; IX, nos. 7356.

Petersburg. The Tsar declared that he had never perceived in his minister anything that did not conform to his instructions, and the same courier who brought Markov his recall also bore him the grand cordon of the Order of St. Andrew. The secretary of the embassy, d'Oubril, was accredited as chargé d'affaires. In passing through Germany, Markov left behind him a trail of insult and vilifications against France and her government. From Regensburg the Bavarian minister reported that the Russian had remarked about the descent project that if the army were lost ". . . the paternal heart of the First Consul would be no more affected than at the death of a fly, that a government without principle, without honor, having nothing to lose, could risk everything."³⁴

The departure of the hated ambassador brought no relief to the strained Franco-Russian relations. The cabinet of St. Petersburg continued to hope that Prussia would succeed in forcing the evacuation of Hanover.³⁵ In Germany the policy of Russia became more and more pro-Austrian, even to the extent of neglecting her former protégés among the South German states. Bavaria was openly reproached for her attachment to France. Referring to the enlargement of the Bavarian army, Alexander Woronzov said sarcastically to the Elector's envoy: "It appears that your master is raising troops to present them to France."³⁶ The bitterness between France and Russia was also immeasurably increased by the controversy regarding the secretary of the Russian embassy at Dresden, d'Antraigues.

Saxony was then under an old-fashioned government, too far removed from France to have been influenced much by the Revolution. The Elector, Frederick Augustus, was a simple, honest soul without initiative or ambition, much shocked by the convulsions in France and deeply pained by the blow dealt Germany

³⁴ Otto to Talleyrand, 12 nivôse an XII (Jan. 2, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 1.

³⁵ Hédouville to Talleyrand, 24 pluviôse an XII (Feb. 13, 1803). A.E., RUSSIE, 143, no. 59.

³⁶ Otto to Talleyrand, 9 frimaire an XII (Nov. 30, 1803). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 179, no. 182.

in the Treaty of Luneville. The French minister to the court of Dresden was the Vicomte de La Rochefoucauld, the son of the celebrated Liancourt. A vain, superficial person, without much credit or reputation, he had rallied to the Consulate, which had rewarded him by introducing him into the diplomatic service. He tried to show his zeal by petty bickering for the maintenance of the dignity of the Republic, and the mere establishment at Dresden of d'Antraigues, who had a notorious record for intrigue,³⁷ was enough to throw him into a fit of excitement. Yet the Paris government did not betray much interest until the secretary of the Russian embassy began to send libelous articles about the First Consul to the British newspapers. Talleyrand had then complained to the Saxon minister at Paris, Bunau, and the Elector, honestly aggrieved, had promised to ask the Tsar for his recall.

But d'Antraigues was too useful an agent for Russia to give up lightly. He kept up an important confidential correspondence with Czartoryski, soon to be foreign minister, in which he transmitted the information he received from his correspondents in Paris, Vienna, and elsewhere.³⁸ Dresden was then aptly termed the "post of observation of the North," and a man who was in close relation with most of the famous intriguers of the time could be of great value to any government. Alexander also welcomed the opportunity to affront the First Consul; d'Antraigues was therefore raised to the rank of Councilor of Legation. Bonaparte justly considered this an insult, and the scene to which he subjected Markov had largely been the result of his resentment. The expulsion of the offending secretary was peremptorily demanded of Saxony under Article I of the Treaty of

³⁷ The activities of d'Antraigues were frequently also a cause of annoyance to other governments. In 1801 we find Colloredo designating him as "ce méchant intrigant Antraigues" in a letter to Thugut. July 3, 1801. S.-A., GROSSE KORRESPONDENZ, 44, 7, fol. 127-134. On the advice of Metternich the Austrian government, in the summer of 1804, secured his services for the bribe of an annual payment of one thousand ducats. He henceforth wrote his reports to the dictation of Cobenzl.

³⁸ Pingaud, *Un agent secret sous la Révolution et l'Empire: le Comte d'Antraigues* (1893), p. 222.

Luneville, which stipulated that no protection was to be granted to persons whose activities were injurious to the other contracting party. The poor Elector finally consented to press vigorously for the recall of d'Antraigues, even asking Prussia to assist him with her influence. But Alexander was determined not to yield to any demand which originated in Paris, and La Rochefoucauld advised his government that only the threat of his own recall would compel Frederick Augustus to expel the offending secretary.³⁹

Such was the strained state of Franco-Russian relations when the news of the seizure and execution of Enghien reached St. Petersburg. The cabinet immediately convened at the Winter Palace; a protest to the Imperial Diet against the violation of German territory was drawn up, and another sent to Paris. The émigrés became the objects of flattering attentions, while Hédouville was placed in a most painful position. Czartoryski refused to receive him and the courtiers made it a point to ignore him. Alexander was besieged by the younger men, especially the Grand Duke Constantine, who urged him to seize the occasion to break completely with France.⁴⁰ The Tsaritsa was wild with indignation, the Empress Dowager hardly less so. The decision was made to put on mourning, the Russian legations throughout Europe being ordered to do the same.⁴¹

The Russian note of protest to the Diet placed the German states in an extremely embarrassing position. A similar one from the King of Sweden had been entirely ignored, but the Tsar could hardly be treated in this fashion. So the Emperor had given official recognition to Alexander's note by communicating it to the Diet. Talleyrand protested vigorously against this procedure, which he characterized as incomprehensible in

³⁹ More success was obtained in the case of another émigré intriguer in the Russian service, the Comte Vernegues. Attached to the legation at Rome, he was reluctantly expelled by the Pope on the demand of the First Consul.

⁴⁰ Hédouville to Talleyrand, 30 germinal an XII (April 20, 1804). A.E., *RUSSE*, 143, no. 93.

⁴¹ The offense was the greater as even under the ancient regime none of the foreign courts had adopted mourning for lateral branches of ruling families. Otto to Talleyrand, 8 prairial an XII (May 28, 1804). A.E., *BAVIÈRE*, 180, no. 88.

the light of a recent statement of Philip Cobenzl to the effect that his government recognized there were ". . . circumstances in which the governments of Europe were forced to take measures for their security which other states ought to abstain from passing judgment upon." The minister of the exterior pointed out that if the First Consul received any kind of interpellation from the Diet, he would not answer, but would issue a declaration of his own which would be more in the nature of an attack than of an apology. If one of the German states should now propose at Regensburg that the matter be considered closed, it would be wise for Austria to support such a motion.⁴²

The Austrian government showed the greatest reluctance to accede to the French request. All Champagny's arguments did not suffice to prevail upon Cobenzl to promise support of a motion to table the question. It thus appeared certain that Austria wished France to make a declaration. This was not, thought the French ambassador, because of any particular hatred or malice, or even a desire to further her own or Germany's interests, for none of these would be served by such a procedure. But she feared the malevolence of Russia, who remained her only support in German affairs as long as France was favoring Prussia. There was no enthusiasm in serving the Tsar in this matter; if France could be made to issue some kind of simple declaration, the Hofburg would be only too glad to consider its debt paid. From his conversations with the ministers of the German states at Vienna Champagny gathered that they were of a similar state of mind. If France would only make any sort of statement, their vote in accord with her wishes would be much facilitated.⁴³

But Bonaparte was obdurate on a point which so nearly concerned his personal prestige and dignity. After long conferences between Talleyrand, Lucchesini, Philip Cobenzl, and Dalberg,

⁴²Talleyrand to Champagny, 3 prairial an XII (May 23, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 375, no. 24.

⁴³Champagny to Talleyrand, 26 floréal, 10 and 16 prairial an XII (May 16 and 31, June 5, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 375, nos. 15, 33, 39.

the minister of Baden, it was decided that the Elector of Baden should present a declaration to the Diet stating that he was satisfied with the explanations privately made him by France and suggesting that the matter be dropped. The court of Carlsruhe held out for some time for the omission of the reference to "explanations," for it feared that Russia would immediately demand their communication. But Prussia and Austria insisted on this feature, for they felt that otherwise the declaration would be so weak that they could hardly acquiesce with dignity.⁴⁴ It was thus decided: on July 2 the representative of Baden delivered a note to the Diet, which, while expressing his master's confidence in the purity of the Tsar's motives, emphasized the danger of the procedure to the repose of Europe. As France had given satisfactory explanations, the Elector would be pleased to see the matter considered at an end.⁴⁵ No voice was heard in opposition and the Diet passed to the order of the day.

To the direct protest of Russia the First Consul replied with a terrible allusion to the death of Paul I: "The complaint which Russia presents today leads one to ask whether if, when England was planning the assassination of Paul I, one had known that the authors of the plot were to be found within a few leagues of the frontier, one would not have hastened to seize them."⁴⁶ Hédouville was instructed to ask for his passports, and on June 7 he quitted St. Petersburg.

The general horror and disapprobation of the affair of Ettenheim was somewhat allayed by the use now made by the First Consul of the relation of the "diplomats conspirateurs" to the plots against him. Throughout the latter part of 1803 and the first months of the succeeding year the process of incriminating the intriguing British ministers had been going on, being directed in large part by Bonaparte personally.⁴⁷ About a week after the

⁴⁴ Talleyrand to Massias, 7 prairial an XII (May 27, 1804). A.E., BADE, 6, no. 143.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 6, no. 142.

⁴⁶ Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution française*, VI, 361.

⁴⁷ Directions to Regnier. *Corr.*, IX, 7300, 7340, 7497.

execution at Vincennes, there appeared the report of the Grand Judge, Regnier, in which the activities of Drake and Spencer Smith were revealed to the public. A circular letter was distributed by Talleyrand to the diplomatic corps, in which the English intrigue was roundly scored. The sensation both inside and outside of France was enormous. The expulsion of the offending ministers and a formal denunciation of their conduct were demanded at Munich and at Stuttgart.⁴⁸ Maximilian Joseph and Montgelas showed the greatest readiness to accede, though they lacked the courage to seize Drake's papers as Talleyrand had requested.⁴⁹ Drake was forced to leave Munich posthaste, and the Bavarian government issued a declaration condemning him severely. Frederick of Württemberg was less pliant. He and his ministers had expressed the utmost indignation at the seizure of Enghien, which they characterized quite openly as a violation of international law and the independence of nations. After long conferences with the chief minister, Winzingerode, Didelot had only been able to gain his promise that Smith (then at Salzburg) would not be permitted to return to Stuttgart, and that the British government would be notified that all relations with him were at an end. A declaration like that of the court of Munich Frederick steadfastly refused to issue.⁵⁰

The British government made the great mistake of ignoring the affair until it was too late to make any counter declaration with dignity. Only when the reports of the general impression in the continental capitals began to come in did the Addington ministry bestir itself. On April 30 Hawkesbury issued a circular note to the foreign ministers at London by which he refuted the charges as to the conduct of Drake and Smith, although

⁴⁸ Talleyrand to Otto, 3 germinal an XII (March 24, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 53; to Didelot, 24 germinal (April 14, 1804). A.E., WÜRTTEMBERG, 40, no. 72.

⁴⁹ Otto to Talleyrand, 10 and 13 germinal an XII (March 31 and April 3, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, nos. 61, 62.

⁵⁰ Didelot to Talleyrand, 29 ventôse and 2 floréal an XII (March 21 and April 22, 1804). A.E., WÜRTTEMBERG, 40, nos. 39, 72.

affirming the right of English ministers to seek a change in the form of the French government. The charges in question would have been ignored with the contempt they deserved if the replies from the ministers of certain governments at Paris had not endowed them with some importance.⁵¹ At the same time Addington, in Parliament, and Hawkesbury, in a note to Bavaria, denounced the supposed Drake correspondence as a rank forgery.⁵² These tardy statements rather tended to weaken than to strengthen the English case. The claim that the envoys of a belligerent state had the right to use their position in a neutral capital to undermine the enemy government was hardly calculated to find approbation, while the solemn declaration that the evidence in this case was a forgery only increased the bad effect!! Montgelas himself had immediately recognized Drake's handwriting when shown the incriminating correspondence by Otto, and the authenticity of the documents was generally accepted.⁵³ The English declaration came too late in any case to prevent a generally unfavorable reaction. At Berlin young George Jackson noted in his diary on April 4:

Public opinion is very strong against England, for the judge's report and the transcript of Drake's letters, ten in number, have been generally read and fully discussed. It is a miserable business, to say the least, and for my part, I pity poor Drake. . . . It is likely that this affair will not excite the attention and disapprobation it would have done, had the Ettenheim outrage ended less tragically.⁵⁴

Even from distant America came a response to the tune struck up in Paris. On June 4 Rufus King wrote to Lord Auckland:

We have just seen Talleyrand's letter to the corps diplomatique — it is a bold and imposing measure and calls for some equally formed act on the part of your cabinet. It is not enough that Englishmen should be satisfied of the innocence of their Government; the welfare

⁵¹ A.E., ANGLETERRE, 602, no. 39.

⁵² Otto to Talleyrand, 1 prairial an XII (May 21, 1804). A.E., BAVÈRE, 180, no. 84.

⁵³ Part of the Drake correspondence is preserved in A.E., ANGLETERRE, 602, but since it was written in synthetic ink, only a portion of it is still legible.

⁵⁴ Jackson, *Diaries and Letters*, I, 194.

of the other states is in some sort concerned in the purity of the British Government, and will be promoted by its solemn and complete vindication.⁵⁵

This the Hawkesbury declaration had failed to achieve. Instead, the balance in the scale of world opinion was somewhat restored as between France and England. The tragedy of Ettenheim was obscured by the comedy of Drake and Smith. Bonaparte rather made the best of a very bad situation, though the shots of the firing squad of Vincennes were to re-echo in his ears throughout his life. For the moment the only result was the breach with Russia and Sweden, which in the case of the former, at least, had only been awaiting a pretext.

⁵⁵ Auckland, *Journal and Correspondence*, IV, 198.

CHAPTER XIII

FRANCO-AUSTRIAN ESTRANGEMENT

IN SPITE of her defeat in the war of the Second Coalition and the rough treatment she had suffered since the Peace of Luneville, Austria still hoped for some kind of understanding with the Republic. With the coming of the general peace the task of the government of Vienna had been to restore in as far as it was possible the old European state system, which had been shaken to its foundations by two momentous changes hostile to Austria: the partition of Poland and the French Revolution. For the time being it was the "French question" which gave the Hofburg the most difficulty. Not only did the new ideas emanating from the great western republic threaten to undermine the old order in the other states, but revolutionary France had made herself the heir to the claims of the old monarchy, prosecuting them with an energy and determination unprecedented in the annals of European history. She had not been satisfied with the achievement of her natural boundaries, but had pressed forward into the Austrian spheres of influence in Italy and South Germany.

To set a dam against the threatening flood from the west, Austria, after the settlement of Luneville, had endeavored to insure herself against the revolutionary menace by the encouragement of a stable government in France, while the best way to restrain the ambitious Republic seemed to lie in a renewal of the connection of 1756. As elsewhere upon the Continent, Bonaparte was regarded at Vienna as the most competent instrument for the restoration of law and order, especially if he should bring about the return of hereditary government in his person. The Concordat in particular was considered an act of wisdom and stability,¹ while his legislative and administrative achievements

¹"Le Concordat, ce grand act de force et de sagesse, lui (le cabinet de Vienne) a paru non seulement une justice et un bienfait envers le peuple.

aroused general admiration. An alliance on the model of that of 1756 therefore promised not only the security of the Austrian dominions against future French encroachments, but also the further restraint of the revolutionary tide.

For the same reason that Austria desired his alliance, the First Consul had been reluctant to enter into her views. His position is easy to understand when we read Vergennes' lucid discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the Franco-Austrian alliance as put forth in the instructions issued to Breteuil when the latter entered upon his embassy at Vienna in 1774. Under the heading "*Des avantages respectifs de notre alliance avec la cour de Vienne*" Vergennes held that the concert assured the safety of Austria's position in Italy and the Netherlands and prevented active opposition on the part of France in the affairs of the Empire. In case of need the court of Vienna could turn all its forces against Prussia or Turkey, while her prospects of becoming the leading power on the Continent were increased if France took to the sea to fight England. The chief advantage for France lay in greater security upon the Continent, where Austria had been the only power which she had to fear. It was thus possible for her to put all of her strength upon the sea, while being spared the necessity of "onerous alliances" in Germany and in the North. The concluding remarks of the minister deserve being quoted:

A final objection against the alliance which we must not hide from ourselves, is that, supposing that it remains in force during the wars which may come about, France will not have, as formerly, direct objects for which to employ her land forces, and that she cannot make conquests except at the expense of her ally or at that of the Germanic body, in whose conservation she is interested, while by allying herself with the King of Prussia, she could keep in view the most useful prospects of aggrandizement.²

français, mais encore un service rendu à toute l'Europe, sur le repos et bonheur de laquelle il doit avoir le plus grand influence." Champagny to Talleyrand, 29 floréal an X (May 19, 1802). A.E., AUTRICHE, 372, no. 229.

²Sorel, *Recueil des instructions données aux ambassadeurs et ministres de France*, I, 480-487.

Here lay the crux of the matter for Bonaparte. The considerations enumerated by Vergennes applied even more to the France of the time of the Consulate than to that of the ancient regime. The Republic had pushed down into Italy, and for the first time in modern history the interests of France here outweighed those of Austria. In Germany the situation was similar; here also the influence of France had for the first time become definitely preponderant. A saturated modern state without political objectives was unthinkable in that age. So, while an alliance with Austria was held in view by Bonaparte as a possible alternative, especially if an agreement with Prussia proved unobtainable, it had too many restrictive features to be consistent with his ambitious views.³

During the period which followed the Peace of Luneville Austria had been pushed back still further by the irresistible advance of the victorious Republic. Great had been her relief when the French troops had retired from Switzerland; so much the greater was her anxiety when the control over the country was restored to the First Consul by the Act of Mediation. France thereby attained a commanding position over Germany, a threatening one against Austria. The increasing influence of the French in Bavaria made the situation even more serious. Between Italy, Switzerland, and Bavaria, the Tyrol was held in a vise. That loyal land once in the hands of an invading army, the way into the heart of the Danube monarchy was open; it is not surprising that the policy of Austria in the ensuing years centered in the hope of preserving peace with France as long as she was not certain of support from one of the other great continental powers.

Let us now cast a glance at the man who had directed the foreign affairs of Austria since September of 1801. Count Louis Cobenzl had for many years been ambassador to the court of the great Catherine, where he had come to believe that the

³ When Champagny went to Vienna, his instructions advised him to study the correspondence of previous ambassadors since 1756, but there was no hint of any prospect of a renewal of the alliance. 28 thermidor an IX (Aug. 16, 1801). *A.E., AUTRICHE*, supplément 26, no. 145.

future of the Hapsburg monarchy hinged on a perfect understanding with Russia. He was a polished courtier and a clever negotiator, a diplomatist of the first rank, but no statesman. His long absence from Vienna had almost made him a stranger to his country, and he did not understand the necessity of making up for this deficiency by applied study. Moreover he was by nature disposed to laziness, dissipation, and extravagance. His brilliant conversation and cynical spirit were not to the taste of Emperor Francis, who lectured him severely on the evils of his life when he took office. The intercourse between the monarch and the Vice-Chancellor was further hampered by the fact that Cobenzl had almost forgotten how to speak German, which Francis habitually employed as a medium of conversation with his ministers. Cobenzl was subjected in everything to the supervision of Chancellor Colloredo, a man who held his post solely by favor of the Emperor, whose preceptor he had been. The reports of the ambassadors were exclusively addressed to the Chancellor, and a voluminous correspondence exists to prove how Cobenzl felt it necessary to refer to him on every detail connected with his department. Yet this control was more nominal than real, for Colloredo was perfectly aware of his own mediocrity and usually permitted his subordinates to go their own way.

It was thus on the insistence of the Vice-Chancellor that Friedrich von Gentz had been taken into the Austrian service. This celebrated publicist had become dissatisfied with his Prussian connection, which denied his pen the freedom of expression he yearned to allow himself against the French. He had not been entirely unfavorable to Bonaparte at the time of the 18th brumaire, but by 1802 the French annexations and interference in Germany had changed his views; he was now as much an enemy of the Corsican as he had been of the Revolution. It was Cobenzl who hit upon the idea of drawing him away from Prussia, for he felt that Austria had need of an energetic champion to present her policy in a favorable light. Curiously enough, it was not France but Prussia against whom he was

to be employed.⁴ It was a choice which Cobenzl was bitterly to regret. The views of Gentz were directly opposite to those of his employer. He burned to be given his head against France, and saw the salvation of Germany and of Europe in a cordial union between Austria and Prussia.⁵ The relations between the two soon cooled. By 1804 Gentz had become the Vice-Chancellor's secret political enemy. He continued to work against France in memorials, in private conversation, and in his correspondence, and, as at Berlin, he soon became one of the intimates of the British ambassador.⁶

At the time of Champagny's arrival in Vienna the court was divided into two parties, that of Archduke Charles and that of Thugut. The Archduke was entrenched in the Ministry of War, whose reorganization took great strides forward under his administration. In the words of Champagny, his party was "*presque réputé le parti français*" and Talleyrand spoke of him in the ambassador's instructions as "*un digne appréciateur du courage et de la politique française.*" The ambassador had orders to support the Archduke as head of the party of peace and conciliation in so far as tact permitted.⁷ Cobenzl himself

⁴ "Ce sera notre besogne de faire apprécier en temps et lieu les dangers de l'agrandissement prussien et de tenir tout le monde en garde contre le système occupateur de cette Cour." Cobenzl to Colloredo, Aug. 5, 1802. Entire dispatch in Fournier, *Gentz und Cobenzl*, p. 191.

⁵ In November of 1803 Gentz wrote to Metternich, with whom he was already on intimate terms: "Die Verbindung zwischen Oesterreich und Preussen, begleitet von einer allgemeinen Konsolidation aller noch übrigen Kräfte Deutschlands, dieses höchst deutsche und zugleich höchst europäische Staatsproject, ist das einzige Mittel, den Untergang der Unabhängigkeit von Europa als Folge jener abscheulichen Revolution zu verhindern." H. Srbik, *Metternich, der Staatsmann und der Mensch* (1925), p. 106.

⁶ At Berlin Gentz had practically played the spy for the British envoy, Lord Carysfort, who wrote on one occasion: "Gentz is in correspondence with Lucchesini himself, and not a day passes in which he does not see Madame Lucchesini, who employs and consults him continually. Gentz also has old habits with Lombard, is frequently at his house, and sees continually all the people who frequent him most." Dec. 5, 1800. *Manuscripts of J. B. Fortescue*, VI, 401-402. At Vienna Paget received much of his secret information from the great publicist, as well as memoirs and reports on the internal organization and administration of Austria. *Paget Papers*, II, 88.

⁷ 28 thermidor an IX (Aug. 16, 1801). A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 26, no. 145.

passed as a member of the Thugut group,⁸ probably because the antagonism between him and Charles soon came to the surface.

During the disputes which ended in the rupture of the Amiens truce, Austria swayed between England and France. The relations with the former country had by no means been entirely cordial during the later stages of the Second Coalition, and the cabinet of Vienna had openly resented the manner in which the English had supported the views of Prussia in the subsequent indemnities settlement. The ambassador whom the Court of St. James had sent to Vienna was not the type of envoy calculated to renew the broken bonds. Haughty, capricious, and habitually inconsiderate, Sir Arthur Paget was soon on the worst of terms with Vice-Chancellor Cobenzl, whom he took every occasion to vilify in his dispatches.

For some time after the rupture of the peace with England the attitude of the First Consul toward Austria was one of suspicion. He was convinced that England would soon be looking about for alliances upon the Continent. That of Russia would not be of decisive importance unless one of the great German powers was also gained. Bonaparte was naturally more suspicious of Austria, at whose expense he had favored Prussia since the Peace of Luneville. His ideas on the subject were quite frankly expressed in a letter to the King of Prussia in July. After reviewing his project for a Franco-Prussian alliance, he goes on to say:

I believe that England cannot hold out very long without aid from the Continent; and this aid she cannot find elsewhere than in Your Majesty or in Austria; Russia, because of her distant position can only come in the second line. I cannot but be satisfied with the sentiments that the court of Vienna exhibits towards me and with the conduct of its cabinet at this time; but the times may change and Your Majesty cannot disapprove that, in this position, I desire to have some guarantee which will assure me the tranquillity of the Continent during the present war with England. The personal character of Your Majesty and that of the Emperor of Russia are sufficient

⁸ Champagne to Talleyrand, 26 vendémiaire an IX (Oct. 20, 1801). *Ibid.*, 372, no. 38.

guarantee to me; but the cabinet of Vienna might easily remember a war which is hardly finished, and Russia herself might be entangled, having so many men who are easily corrupted.⁹

Yet this suspicion on the part of Bonaparte did not result in any noticeable lack of cordiality in his treatment of Austria. The court of Vienna was giving him every cause to be satisfied with its position of neutrality. In June it published an ordinance which had been agreed upon with the French ambassador in 1801 and whose execution had only been suspended by the signature of the preliminary peace between France and England. This measure was exceedingly favorable to French interests, for it prohibited the outfitting and provisioning of the naval and military forces of the belligerents from Austria's Adriatic ports.¹⁰ As the French ships seldom entered the Adriatic, and as they, moreover, could secure all necessary supplies in the neighboring Italian ports, the whole force of the ordinance was directed against the British.

While Austria regretted the renewal of war between France and Great Britain, she was equally anxious to take all possible advantage of the concentration of the French government upon the struggle with the island kingdom. Nothing was to be done in Italy, but the lost preponderance in Germany was not yet beyond the reach of recovery. "Already she is turning the situation to account," wrote the annoyed Champagny, "and she has announced pretensions in the Diet which she would certainly not have brought forward at the time when the mediating powers were directing the affairs of Germany."¹¹ Even during the later stage of the dispute which ended in the Anglo-French rupture, the cabinet of Vienna had come to realize that it could now afford a more active policy. The First Consul, in order to secure the ratification of the indemnities settlement, and thus the

⁹ July 29, 1803. *Corr.*, VIII, no. 6956.

¹⁰ Copie d'une dépêche de la Chancellerie intime de Cour et d'État à l'Ambassadeur Comte de Cobenzl en date de Vienne le 15 juin 1803. A.E., AUTRICHE, 373, no. 286.

¹¹ To Talleyrand, 24 prairial an XI (June 13, 1803). A.E., AUTRICHE, 373, no. 281.


final recognition of the attainment of the Rhine frontier, as well as to win the support of Austria on the question of Malta, had betrayed greater consideration for the imperial interests in Germany than at any time since the Peace of Luneville. This change of spirit had become evident in the conflict over the "*droit d'épaves*." Under the terms of the Imperial Recess the possessions of secularized institutions, no matter where or in what form they were found, were to go to the state annexing them.¹² The Emperor chose to ignore this article and revived a pretended right of forfeiture to the imperial exchequer. All properties and monies within the Austrian borders which had belonged to secularized principalities or institutions were confiscated, the booty in the way of deposits in the Bank of Vienna alone amounting to 20,000,000 crowns. A storm of indignation broke out in the Diet at Regensburg. Those states which were most affected appealed to France and Russia, whose representatives, Laforest and Buhler, were still present. The cabinet of Vienna, rendered pessimistic by bitter experience, was already thinking of compromising, instructing its representative, Stadion, to suggest that the offended states might be compensated out of the estates of the imperial knights. Imagine its surprise when Laforest announced that the French government would maintain an attitude of neutrality on the question! The spirit of the Austrian statesmen became more optimistic than it had been for years. "We see the dawn of happier days than we have ever experienced," wrote the delighted Cobenzl.¹³ The friendly words of Champagny added to this encouragement. On April 7 he remarked to the Vice-Chancellor that there were no further differences between France and Austria; the December Convention had settled everything.

¹² Article XXXVI of the Recess (Reichsdeputationshauptschluss) reads: "Les chapitres, abbayes et couvens nommement et formellement assignés en indemnité, de même que ceux mis à la disposition des princes territoriaux, passent à leurs nouveaux possesseurs avec tous leurs biens, droits, capitaux et revenus en quelque lieu qu'ils soient situés, sauf les distractions expressés." G. de Martens, *Recueil des traités*, VII, 499.

¹³ Fournier, *Genz und Cobenzl*, p. 71.

The pleasure of the Austrians was for a time reflected in a more accommodating spirit on the question of Malta as well as in the ordinance of neutrality. This measure had been so decidedly favorable to France that the English and Russians began to suspect the existence of a secret concert and had to be reassured by energetic denials from Vienna. This spirit of accommodation, however, tended to diminish as it became less necessary to propitiate Bonaparte. In direct proportion to the lamentations of Prussia the estrangement between France and Russia gave rise to the greatest satisfaction at Vienna. It was hoped that the Danube monarchy would now at least emerge from her isolation. She was in fact soon to discover that her problem was becoming one of avoiding the dangerous embraces of the Russian bear. The first indication of this change of front was encountered when Prince Dolgoruky, one of the Tsar's aides-de-camp, came to the Austrian capital for the ostensible purpose of placing an order for army supplies. While dining with the Vice-Chancellor he suddenly exclaimed: "Are we never going to unite our forces to fall upon these damned French and put an end to their robberies?" The startled Austrian confined his response to emphasizing that a united front of the two imperial courts would in itself contribute to confining Bonaparte's activities within proper limits.¹⁴

Thus the situation in the autumn of 1803 appeared much brighter than it had been when the year opened. Russia having forsaken her friend of the period of German mediation, it now seemed safe to do a little fishing in troubled waters. The by-products of the indemnities settlement offered every possible opportunity for interference in German affairs. The princes of South Germany had deemed the time ripe for the consolidation of their states and were annexing the tiny territories of the imperial knights (Reichsritter) within their borders. The Elector of Bavaria was the most forward among them, even occupying

¹⁴ Cobenzl to Colloredo, Sept. 1, 1803.  GROSSE KORRESPONDENZ, 462, fol. 8-18.

upon the Austrian frontier the little principality of Oberhausen, over which the Emperor claimed suzerain rights. The indignation at Vienna was extreme, and troops were concentrated all along the Bavarian border. On Champagny's protest that this measure was not necessary to get the Bavarians to evacuate, Cobenzl insisted that it was the only language the court of Munich understood; everything would come to a halt the moment the Elector consented to retire.¹⁵

At Munich the consternation passed all bounds. Montgelas counseled the Elector to risk the loss of his states rather than give way, while Otto advised minor concessions to save time and to give France and Prussia the opportunity to exert their influence at Vienna.¹⁶ But Maximilian Joseph was too weak to resist. On December 6 the news arrived in Vienna that Bavaria had given way, and Cobenzl at last promised to halt the concentration of troops. Champagny did not believe that Austria had had any other end in view than the one announced, for otherwise she would hardly have contented herself with the mere evacuation of Oberhausen. But he added the significant comment:

This satisfaction, which probably was her due and which she obtained by a menace, gives her a great advantage over Bavaria in the disputes which are born each day from the mixture of territories and the uncertainty of respective rights. The affair of Oberhausen may become an argument which the stronger may recall to the weaker, in order to establish all his pretensions.¹⁷

The ambassador's prediction was to come true far earlier than he had expected. Austria had from the first been opposed to the aggressions of the South German princes against the immediate nobility. The latter not only was traditionally loyal to the House of Hapsburg, but had long played an important

¹⁵ To Talleyrand, 1 and 7 frimaire an XII (Nov. 22 and 28, 1803). A.E., AUTRICHE, 374, nos. 74, 78.

¹⁶ Otto to Talleyrand, 10 frimaire an XII (Dec. 1, 1803). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 179, no. 184.

¹⁷ To Talleyrand, 15 and 18 frimaire an XII (Dec. 6 and 9, 1803). A.E., AUTRICHE, 374, nos. 84, 87.

mined never to allow this, and would regard any negotiation with this end in view as an act hostile to the European equilibrium.

It will be necessary to accept all protestations literally and to give him [Cobenzl] to understand that, however occupied France may be with the war she is now pursuing, she is keeping her eye upon the affairs of the Continent and on those of Germany, with which they are intimately connected.²³

The whole aspect of the question was now changed by the sudden intervention of Russia. Throughout the latter part of 1803 the court of St. Petersburg had followed a marked pro-Austrian policy in German affairs, in spite of the lamentations of Bavaria, which had been in the habit of looking to the Tsar for assistance. Probably in order to prevent singlehanded interference on the part of France, or that of France in conjunction with Prussia, Alexander now suggested a common mediation. Early in February his chargé d'affaires at Paris, Oubril, presented a note which proposed that a negotiation be commenced at Vienna, where, through the mutual coöperation of France, Russia, and the head of the Empire, it would not be difficult to arrive at an amicable settlement by which all attacks upon the prerogatives of the equestrian order would be brought to an end. The governments of Paris and St. Petersburg should therefore empower their ambassadors at the Austrian capital to treat upon and conclude an arrangement on this basis.²⁴ This proposition was as one-sided as the policy of Russia had been in the mediation between France and Great Britain. It pointed toward the restoration to the immediate nobility of its old rights and independence, everything being settled by the direction of the Hofburg and without the concurrence of any of the other interested parties.

For the moment Bonaparte took Russia's suggestion under advisement. Bavaria was in the meantime informed that while France was displeased with her precipitation, she also disap-

²³ 26 pluviôse an XII (Feb. 14, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 374, no. 167.

²⁴ Oubril's note is in A.E., AUTRICHE, 374, no. 169.

proved of the attitude assumed by Austria and had notified the court of Vienna that she would never permit the extension of its frontier to the Inn.²⁵ At Munich the decision had already fallen. Uncertain of French or Prussian support and knowing Russia to be hostile, Maximilian Joseph had resigned himself to a second submission. He consented to the restoration of the immediate nobility within his dominions to the same position it had enjoyed before its enforced subordination to the Bavarian state, though reserving his rights and pretensions.²⁶ Buol now informed the Elector that he could consider the *conclusum* as raised, though the orders regarding the execution of its mandate could not be entirely revoked until the other princes had equally receded.²⁷ This was as much as a declaration that the Austrian troops concentrated in Swabia would remain for the time being — the threat hanging over the head of the Elector and his ministers was not yet removed.

At Paris the First Consul had concentrated his attention upon the danger which he now believed to be threatening him on the flank. He could not afford to forget the Continent in his preoccupation with the maritime war — how entirely he had thrown himself into that struggle is proved by the passive rôle which France had played until late in February in relation to the crisis in Germany. His attention once aroused, he devoted himself to the problem with all his customary energy. The reports of Otto may have done much to influence him in favor of Bavaria and to turn him against Austria. The minister at Munich frankly pleaded the case of the Elector, of whose forward-looking policy he was a great admirer. The fate of the immediate nobility, he maintained, was settled in any case, for its preservation was no longer reasonable in the new organization of the

²⁵ Talleyrand to Otto, 26 pluviôse an XII (Feb. 14, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 22.

²⁶ Montgelas to Buol, Feb. 16, 1804. *Ibid.*, 180, no. 23; Gravenreuth to Vice-Chancellor Cobenzl, Feb. 20 and 23, 1804. A.E., AUTRICHE, 374, nos. 176, 179 bis.

²⁷ Otto to Talleyrand, 2 ventôse an XII (Feb. 21, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 23.

rôle in the Austrian army and administration.¹⁸ Hardly had the affair of Oberhausen therefore come to its conclusion than the Emperor brought up the question of the immediate nobility. The Aulic Council was convened, and on January 23, 1804, it pronounced a *conclusum* which annulled every measure taken against the equestrian order in Swabia, Franconia, and in the right Rhenish territories. The execution of the mandate was confided to the Archchancellor, the Electors of Saxony and of Baden, and the Archduke of Austria.¹⁹ Against whom the measure was principally aimed was evident from the concentration of the Council's thunders upon the Elector of Bavaria, while the ruler of Württemberg, an almost equally great offender, was comparatively spared.

The collection of troops on the borders of Bavaria now commenced on an even greater scale than before. The ardent spirits about Archduke Charles, who appears to have been the prime mover in the affair, continued to push him forward. An intrigue, the exact nature of which is still not entirely clear, was now set in motion by his intimates. Probably with the approval of Emperor Francis, but without the knowledge of Cobenzl, a Bavarian agent in Vienna, Baron Aretin, was approached by Fassbinder, the chief confidant of the Archduke, with the old proposition of the exchange of the Bavarian districts on the right bank of the Inn for Austrian possessions in Swabia. He was told that the Emperor really had very little interest in the equestrian order and would be glad to give in on the question if Bavaria would consent to the revision of the frontier. The proposition outlined was not very generous: for the Upper Palatinate, Passau, the right bank of the Inn, the county of Wer-

¹⁸ Most valuable of all to the government of Vienna was the facility it enjoyed in recruiting its noncommissioned officers in the territories of the equestrian order. The number was not large, perhaps 800 to 1,000 per year, but most of the men could read and write, and such were not to be found in Austrian or Hungarian villages. As explained to Otto by Buol and described in the former's report of the 14th frimaire an XII (Dec. 5, 1803). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 179, no. 185.

¹⁹ A copy of the *conclusum* is in A.E., AUTRICHE, 374, no. 130.

denfels, and a part of the abbey of Kempten, Bavaria was to receive only Burgau.²⁰ These tentatives were renewed a week later by Baron von Müller, the chargé d'affaires of Switzerland, and Count Fugger, the ex-minister of Austria to the Swabian Circle. The former claimed to be acting in behalf of the Chancery of State, the latter under the orders of the Emperor himself. Aretin of course took care to communicate everything to Champagny, while Montgelas did the same to Otto. Champagny was convinced that the agents who made the overtures believed they were acting according to the wishes of their government.²¹

The news of the conclusum of January 23 had been received with marked disapprobation at the Tuileries. The overtures of the Austrians to Aretin regarding an exchange of territory, however, did not create as bad an impression as might have been expected, for Philip Cobenzl had already presented an extract from a dispatch of the Vice-Chancellor's, in which, on the mere rumor of such a tentative, all intention of any movement in this direction had been denied.²² It would appear from this that Cobenzl really had no knowledge of the intrigues of the war minister's party, for he would hardly, without any previous interpellation, have bound his hands on a project so dear to Austrian policy. Yet Bonaparte did not entirely trust the cabinet of Vienna, which is evidenced by the instructions now sent to Champagny. The First Consul, they declared, was "struck" by the late conduct of Austria, who seemed to intend to reconquer in peace what had been lost in war, and had chosen Bavaria as the most likely field for aggrandizement. Champagny was to speak of the First Consul's great satisfaction with Austria's assurance that she entertained no projects of "arrondissement" along the Inn, *especially as the French government was deter-*

²⁰ Otto to Talleyrand, 3 pluviôse, an XII (Jan. 21, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 9.

²¹ Champagny to Talleyrand, 10 pluviôse an XII (Jan. 30, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 374, no. 140.

²² Extrait d'une dépêche du cabinet de Vienne, Jan. 14, 1804. A.E., AUTRICHE, 374, no. 123.

Empire. The whole question was being used as a club to intimidate the court of Munich, so that the ". . . King of Bohemia might profit by what the Emperor, as judge, had ordered, and the Archduke of Austria had executed." If Austria was seeking a pretext for war, she could hardly do better in her choice of a minister than in the person of Buol, who did not limit himself to provoking offensive measures at Vienna, but took particular care to render himself odious and appeared to desire that everything he asked should be refused, so that he might complain about everything.²⁸ Such words, coming from a man who was one of the best diplomats in the French service, cannot have failed to affect the decisions of the First Consul. The appeals of the Bavarian minister, Cetto, may have also had some influence.²⁹ A definitely forward policy was decided upon; Austria would have to be shown that she could not expect France to keep her back turned while she overthrew the settlement of the previous year. The Russian proposal was to be used as the chief instrument for defeating the Austrian projects. On February 28 Talleyrand finally replied to Oubril. The idea of renewed intervention and mediation was accepted, but as the former measures of the two governments had been instituted at Regensburg as the center of the Germanic system, this city would again be the more appropriate seat of the negotiations. The representative of France at the Diet had therefore been instructed to announce the renewed mediation of France and Russia. The latter country would of course be glad to agree to this slight alteration in her proposal.³⁰

This course once adopted, every possible measure was taken to insure its success. Otto was told that the task of Bavaria would now be to get the fullest coöperation from Prussia in sup-

²⁸ Otto's dispatches of the 12 nivôse and 21 pluviôse an XIII (Jan. 2 and Feb. 10, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, nos. 1, 19.

²⁹ "Bientôt il n'y aura pas une partie des états électoraux, tant ancien que nouveaux, ou la Cour de Vienne n'ait quelque chose à revendiquer." From Cetto's note of Feb. 15, 1804. *Ibid.*, supplément 11, fol. 66-69.

³⁰ A.E., AUTRICHE, 374, no. 182; Talleyrand's instructions to Bacher on the notification to be made to the Diet is no. 193.

porting the views of France at Regensburg. The North German power was not appreciating its opportunities to forward the interests of the states connected with her system: "It is this which you must insinuate in your conversations to the end that the court of Munich should excite that of Prussia to bind itself more to France."³¹ It is easy to see what the First Consul and Talleyrand were after. Bavaria had shown a marked penchant for a Prussian connection during the last year, and it would be well to convince her that France alone was able and willing to protect her clients. At the same time Prussia might be drawn more fully into the general European system of the Republic, particularly if she could be prevailed upon to take a pronouncedly anti-Russian stand at Regensburg. By centering the mediation at the seat of the Diet, France could raise her own prestige and maneuver with greater facility against Austria than at Vienna. By this farfetched interpretation of her mediations project, Russia was similarly placed in an extremely embarrassing position, which is well portrayed by Otto when he triumphantly writes:

I render homage, Citizen Minister, to the skill with which you make Russia play a rôle exactly opposite to that with which she has charged herself. She can now only step back by declaring in the face of all Germany that she renounces her title of mediating power and that the secondary states no longer have anything to hope from her.³²

The overtures at Regensburg were accompanied with a menace whose terms the Hofburg could not fail to understand. If Austria should refuse to disarm, it might happen that the French government would propose to the court of Munich the conclusion of an offensive and defensive alliance by which 40,000 French soldiers would enter Bavaria.³³ When a body of Austrian troops entering Swabia happened to pass through Swiss

³¹ To Otto, 11 and 12 ventôse an XII (March 2 and 3, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 31.

³² 18 ventôse an XII (March 9, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 34.

³³ Talleyrand to Champagny 11 ventôse; to P. Cobenzl, 12 ventôse an XII (March 1 and 2, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 374, nos. 192, 194.

territory, Talleyrand was ordered to demand immediate explanations from the Austrian ambassador. Such movements so close to French territory might indicate a diversion in favor of England on the Continent; the First Consul would like to learn the views of Austria before he took measures of military security. The envoy's reply could of course only be a reiteration of the most pacific intentions.³⁴

The French and Bavarian representations at Berlin produced the desired effect. Count Goertz, the Prussian representative at the Diet, was ordered to announce that his master supported the rights of the princes against the "usurpations of the Aulic Council." If this measure had been executed earlier it might have saved Bavaria from a humiliating submission, but the Prussian stand at Ratisbon had been weakened throughout by Goertz, who was himself a member of the immediate nobility. At Vienna the action of the court of Berlin was greeted with an outburst of rage; Cobenzl was beside himself and treated the Prussian ambassador, Keller, to a tirade which the First Consul himself could hardly have improved upon.³⁵ Yet Frederick William and his ministers were never more irresolute than when after they had taken a step forward, and they now seemed to hold back in proportion to the willingness of the French to defend the common interests.

The discussions between Champagny and Cobenzl at Vienna maintained for a time their animated character. The French continued their peremptory demands for disarmament; the great plan of descent, to be confided to Latouche-Tréville, was then in preparation, and Bonaparte felt that he could not afford to undertake anything positive until there was no further danger of a crisis in Germany. The Austrians had by now given up any hopes they may have entertained of taking advantage of the situation to extract Bavaria's consent to the Inn exchange.

³⁴ Talleyrand to P. Cobenzl, March 10; Cobenzl to Talleyrand, March 11, 1804. *A.E., AUTRICHE*, 374, nos. 207, 208.

³⁵ Otto to Talleyrand, 9 and 13 germinal an XII (March 31 and April 3, 1804). *A.E., BAVIÈRE*, 180, nos. 60, 62.

The overtures of Fassbinder, Fugger, and Müller were formally disavowed by Cobenzl, who assured Aretin that they were intriguers who sought to embroil Austria with other powers. A note containing statements of the same nature was submitted to Talleyrand by Philip Cobenzl.⁸⁶

From her official attitude in the matter of her military preparations Austria found it much more difficult to recede. Threat after threat was hurled at her by the First Consul. His future attitude in German affairs, he declared, would depend upon her action; it would be necessary to send troops to Schafhausen or into Bavaria — at least 15,000 men; if he had to fear a continental war from the side of Austria every month it would be like a real diversion in favor of England and would force him to assure peace upon land before conquering it upon the sea.⁸⁷ But the *amour propre* of the Austrians would not permit them to back down. Champagny was unable to convince Cobenzl that the First Consul would be free from bias in his proposed mediation; nor was an exact impartiality desired by the Hofburg. By the promise of the strictest secrecy concerning the demands he was making, Bonaparte was in the end able to win over Philip Cobenzl,⁸⁸ but at Vienna the statesmen continued in the hope that France would be satisfied with the pledge that the troops in Swabia would not be further increased. On April 10 Philip Cobenzl delivered a lengthy note, which, after expounding the views of Austria on the whole question of the immediate nobility, promised to maintain the status quo in military matters. The "prodigious extension" given to the propositions of the Emperor of Russia was complained about, as the Tsar had merely wished to protect the equestrian order. As for the mediation of the two powers, Austria could take no

⁸⁶ Otto to Talleyrand, 26 pluviôse an XII (Feb. 15, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 21; "Extrait" of a dispatch of P. Cobenzl, Feb. 10, 1804. A.E., AUTRICHE, 374, no. 154.

⁸⁷ Talleyrand to Champagny 1 and 9 germinal an XII (March 22 and 31, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 374, no. 143, 240.

⁸⁸ "Il a séduit mon pauvre cousin, qui, lui-même, nous presse de prendre la parti désiré." Reported by Champagny from conversation with Louis Cobenzl, 21 germinal an XII (April 11, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 374, no. 256.

position until she had received further information on the matter from St. Petersburg.³⁹

Ten days after the receipt of this communication Talleyrand informed Champagny that, while the said note would require a lengthy reply, he could for the time being convey the simple statement that France would in future be glad to see Austria achieve her end by means of political or moral influence, but that anything gained by the movement of troops would again meet with lively protests.⁴⁰ The reason for this unusual complaisance was Bonaparte's need of that of Austria in another connection — the recognition of the newly created Empire.

The renewed contest between France and Austria for supremacy in Germany left a bad impression upon both parties. The Austrian statesmen had been so happy about the ground they had regained since the time of the Imperial Recess, that they could not reconcile themselves to a second renunciation. It was now feared that France would again turn her attention to the Continent and strive to maintain, if not extend, the predominance which she had acquired during the year 1802. What the Hofburg felt the most bitterly of all was the preference continually shown Prussia. The Austrians complained that Lucchesini exercised an unjustifiable influence at Paris, that he alone was ever consulted on German affairs.⁴¹ What probably did not occur to the statesmen of Vienna was that Bonaparte's remarks and the favor shown the Prussian ambassador were mainly intended to increase the jealousy between the two German powers, so as to play them off against one another the more easily.⁴²

³⁹ A.E., *AUTRICHE*, 374, no. 255.

⁴⁰ A.E., *AUTRICHE*, 374, no. 263.

⁴¹ Champagny to Talleyrand, 25 germinal an XII (April 15, 1804). A.E., *AUTRICHE*, 374, no. 259.

⁴² For the person of Lucchesini Bonaparte never had any regard. As early as 1801 Louis Cobenzl while in Paris had occasion to report the First Consul as saying "tout le mal possible de Lucchesini." To Emperor Francis, April 19, 1801. S.-A., *FRANKREICH*, 262, IV, fol. 9-10.

As for the First Consul, he was much put out about what he chose to consider the duplicity of the Austrians. It was patent that they had rushed to take advantage of his preoccupation, and he even suspected them of having meditated an attack upon France during the course of the descent upon England. At Munich Otto gathered from the reports of Gravenreuth that while Cobenzl had been very reluctant to move, the intimates of Archduke Charles in the Department of War were influenced by Gentz and the British chargé d'affaires, Stuart, and that the order to arm had been given even before the Bavarian occupation of Oberhausen.

In comparing the period of the First Consul's last voyage and that of his return to Paris, one can infer that the shield was raised the moment it was presumed at Vienna that our expedition had started for England, and that things calmed down after the First Consul had returned to the capital.⁴³

Bonaparte even suspected that the Austrian government had known of the plot against him and had drawn courage for its adventure therefrom. "I am much inclined to think," he wrote to Talleyrand, "that there is more duplicity in the conduct of the court of Vienna than you believe. It was informed of the conspiracy; it elevated its tone in consequence."⁴⁴ How unjustified this suspicion was is demonstrated by the fact that Paget on his part was certain that it was Cobenzl who, informed by Starhemberg, had notified Champagny of the presence of Pichegru at Paris.⁴⁵

While the immediate results of the renewed clash between Austria and France in Germany appeared to favor the former, it was France who gained the more lasting advantage. Austria, it is true, maintained her dignity and was able to force Bavaria to back down on two successive occasions. Yet it was France

⁴³ Dispatch of the 22 frimaire an XII (Dec. 13, 1803). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 195.

⁴⁴ *Corr.*, IX, no. 7630.

⁴⁵ To Hawkesbury, April 2, 1804. *Paget Papers*, II, 103.

who gained renewed prestige in Germany, where Bavaria now definitely stepped to her side, while the other princes had again found in her a protector who was never caught napping. In the final analysis France had secured another advantage in the contest for hegemony in Germany.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ROAD TO HEGEMONY IN GERMANY

THE conspiracies against the life of the First Consul had demonstrated the flaw in the constitution of the French Republic. What would happen if one of the plans of assassination or abduction should succeed? There was obviously no man in France who could step into his shoes, particularly after Moreau had been removed from the political scene. It is of no particular interest to us just how much stimulation was necessary to convince the Senate that the executive power ought to be made hereditary. Probably not much was needed, for every Senator had 30,000 francs' worth of reasons for making the existing order permanent. On May 18, 1804, the title of emperor was offered to the chief of the Republic, and during the course of the same day the signature on the great man's letters changed from Bonaparte to Napoleon. The nation ratified the alteration as a matter of course, but the question of foreign recognition was a far more difficult one. Would the proud old houses of the Continent accept among them the interloper whose star was already the brightest in the European firmament?

The problem was not so serious as might have been assumed at first glance. Austria, Prussia, Spain, the Holy Father, and all of the little states had for some time been favorable to the personal rule of Bonaparte. The Tsar was hostile on supposedly ideological grounds; he had even fulminated against the establishment of the Consulate for life. In any case, the rift between France and Russia in consequence of the affair of Ettenheim prohibited the immediate recognition of Bonaparte's new dignity. The British, with the exception of the ultras of both parties, had greeted the Consulate for life with favor. One of the first tentatives of any government to encourage the establishment of an hereditary monarchy in the person of the First

Consul had come from Addington. If Britain found it to her interest to make peace, there would be little difficulty about the recognition of Bonapartist rule. She and Russia therefore only came in the second line, it being the acknowledgment of Prussia and Austria that was most essential.

The court of Berlin had for a long time been favorable to the re-establishment of an hereditary regime in France. Alone among the European sovereigns Frederick William III was so hostile to the Bourbons that he preferred even the Consular government to that of Louis XVIII. Prussia had shown extreme accommodation in acting as a medium for a negotiation between Bonaparte and the exiled prince, and her official attitude in the Enghien affair was irreproachable. It was believed at Berlin that, once a member of the family of sovereigns, the ambitious Corsican would curb somewhat his aggressive tendencies and devote himself to the consolidation of his position.

On April 6, over a month before the Empire was officially proclaimed, Laforest had been instructed to ascertain the attitude of the Prussian government.¹ The reply was as agreeable as could be expected, Lucchesini being ordered to express the complete satisfaction of the court of Berlin.² On June 14 Napoleon officially informed his Prussian "brother" of his accession to the throne, addressing the King as "*allié et confédéré*."³ These terms were not exactly to the taste of the Berlin government, and in the royal answer they were carefully avoided.⁴ But this alteration did not subtract from the friendliness of the reply, and the relations between the two countries gained in cordiality by the exchange.

Napoleon had more cause to be anxious about the recognition of the Hapsburgs — one which was sure to be of greater weight in securing his cordial admission into the family of sovereigns. For this reason the recent menacing attitude re-

¹ Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 168.

² April 23, 1804. *Ibid.*, no. 172.

³ This note is mistakenly labeled as addressed to the King of Spain in the *Corr.*, IX, no. 7809.

⁴ Frederick William to Napoleon, June 28. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 184.

sulting from Austria's military demonstrations against Bavaria was relaxed. In a conference with Philip Cobenzl he expressed his confidence in the pledge that no further troops would be sent to Swabia. On the same day Talleyrand wrote to Champagny:

☛ It is always with the greatest satisfaction that he [the First Consul] sees his views in accord with those of the court of Vienna. He would like to count upon a perfect reciprocity in this. A great occasion is about to present itself to the court of Vienna to give the measure of its dispositions toward France and toward the First Consul.⁵

The minister of the exterior then launched into an account of the Tribunate's motion to offer the imperial title to the head of the Republic. Champagny should sound the Austrians on the question of recognition, being sure to emphasize that the title of "Emperor of the French" had been chosen as less vague and more restrictive than that of "Emperor of the Gauls." But the acquiescence of Austria in the new dignity was a far more difficult thing to procure than that of Prussia had been. Not that the cabinet of Vienna objected to the re-establishment of hereditary government in France; in the past years it had insinuated on more than one occasion that nothing would cause it greater satisfaction.⁶ The alarming feature for her lay in the imperial title, which was suspected of hiding pretensions that might come to the surface later. Therefore, when Champagny brought up the question informally in a conversation with Cobenzl, the latter made no objection to the hereditary principle, but remarked that a concert with other powers would be necessary for the recognition of the title of emperor. The ambassador refuted this contention with force, and the matter was left in abeyance for reference to Emperor Francis.⁷ At Paris Philip Cobenzl meanwhile expressed only

⁵ 13 floréal an XII (May 3, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 375, no. 7.

⁶ During Louis Cobenzl's sojourn in Paris in 1801 he had strongly urged the establishment of an hereditary regime upon the First Consul. Cobenzl to Emperor Francis, March 26, 1801. S.-A., FRANKREICH, 262, fol. 115-120.

⁷ Champagny to Talleyrand, 26 floréal an XIII (May 16, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 375, no. 15.

his "personal gratification" on being informed of the projected change in the French government.

Austria having shown such reluctance to express herself favorably on the question of the imperial title, Talleyrand notified Philip Cobenzl that all official communication would have to cease until the ambassador was newly accredited. In the meantime the usual informal conversations might continue. At Vienna Champagny continued to urge immediate and unhesitating recognition as a proof of friendly sentiments toward France, but he could not overcome the reluctance of the Hofburg to make a positive decision. The policy of Austria, the ambassador had once said, was traditionally dilatory by habit when it was not so by interest. She could not understand that she would not gain in some way if she kept everyone about her inactive.⁸ Now her *amour propre* was wounded by the imperial title, which she feared would cause difficulties in questions of etiquette, while the Hapsburgs would lose in dignity by the creation of an hereditary empire in western Europe. There was also the danger that other sovereigns would seize the occasion to raise their states to the same dignity. England already had an "Imperial Parliament," and Prussia had at times seemed inclined to erect an imperial hegemony in North Germany.

All these considerations were weighed in their most painful aspects by the Viennese statesmen. To gain time and to prevent France from taking offense at the protracted delay, they overflowed with eulogies for Napoleon and softened their language toward Bavaria. Otto reported from Munich that Buol had congratulated him so warmly on the establishment of the Empire that it was certain he was acting on instructions. It looked for once as if Austria were really trying to do away with the chief causes of difference between herself and Bavaria.

This conduct [Otto informed Talleyrand] is looked upon here as the barometer of the pacific dispositions of the court of Vienna

⁸ 16 thermidor an XI (Aug. 4, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 375, no. 334.

toward the French Empire. In truth, that court has never been so exacting toward Bavaria as when circumstances seemed to lead to a rupture with France.⁹

To quiet Austria's fears of difficulties on the question of etiquette, Talleyrand stated that France would not ask for a standing superior to that of the old monarchy, thus acknowledging the preëminence of the Holy Roman Empire. If the Hapsburgs should ever lose the imperial crown and should desire to erect their hereditary dominions into an empire, France would be the first to offer her recognition. Champagne was even empowered to give this assurance in writing.¹⁰ But this was not yet enough for the Hofburg. It now officially recognized the institution of hereditary government in France, while reserving the question of title for negotiation. As a basis for the latter the acknowledgment of the priority of the Holy Roman Empire and equality for the sovereign of Austria were demanded. Long and interminable discussions now followed, multifarious notes were exchanged, suggestions and counter-suggestions were made by the score. Cobenzl insisted on the immediate establishment of the new hereditary empire, to which Napoleon readily assented. "I really owe thanks to the court of Vienna for this suggestion," he wrote to Talleyrand, "since it is very probable that it will bring her difficulties from all over Europe. The vanity of Russia will be wounded, that of Prussia even more." On the question of etiquette he was obdurate; he would give way to the Emperor of Germany, but the ruler of Austria would have to yield him precedence. An alternative would be the equality of the three emperors: "*Celui d'Allemagne perdrait son rang, mais celui d'Autriche gagnerait l'égalité.*"¹¹

But Austria felt that her recognition demanded a higher price. "A treaty of peace would not be more difficult to agree

⁹ 8 prairial and 1 thermidor an XII (May 28 and July 20, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 119.

¹⁰ 20 prairial an XII (June 9, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 375, no. 46.

¹¹ Aug. 25, 1804. A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 27, no. 223; *Corr.*, IX, no. 7852.

upon than the very simple statement to which you have authorized me," lamented the desperate Champagny.¹² The resentment at this conduct was extreme at Paris; rumors of war circulated through the city.¹³ "If the court of Vienna delays much longer its recognition of the new order of things and then gives way in the end, it will again have compromised itself," reported the envoy of Baden, Dalberg.¹⁴

On August 7 the long-delayed accord was finally reached. The cabinet of Vienna made known its recognition through her ambassador at Paris, while France promised to be the first to recognize the hereditary empire of Austria. The ceremonial standing of the two states was to be the same as before the Revolution, the order of precedence being the Holy Roman Empire, the French Empire, and the Austrian Empire.¹⁵ Cobenzl had held out to the bitter end for the parity of rank, and it had only been with the greatest difficulty and under threat of his recall that Champagny had succeeded in gaining his point.

The negotiation concerning the recognition of Napoleon's imperial title gives a picture of Austrian diplomacy at its worst. Instead of making a bid for the friendship of the new Caesar by an immediate and cordial acknowledgment, the Viennese statesmen had insisted on a protracted negotiation in which the most insignificant points had been haggled about ad infinitum. Archduke Charles alone had a clear view of the situation, but his influence with his imperial brother had for some time been on the wane.¹⁶ The Austrian ambassador therefore was not present when the other envoys offered their credentials at the Tuileries on July 8, and this public demonstration of

¹² To Talleyrand, 16 thermidor an XII (July 29, 1804). *Ibid.*, 375, no. 110.

¹³ Reports of the Prefecture of Police, July 31, 1804. Aulard, *Paris sous le premier Empire*, I, 151.

¹⁴ To Edelsheim, July 19, 1804. Erdmannsdörffer and Obser, *Pol. Korr. Karl Friedrichs von Baden*, V, no. 127.

¹⁵ A copy of Champagny's declaration is in A.E., AUTRICHE, 375, no. 120.

¹⁶ On June 1 Charles had written: "Jetzt ist die Gelegenheit, die vielleicht nie so wieder kommt, sich mit Frankreich auf einen besseren Fuss zu setzen, dadurch in den Angelegenheiten Europas einen entscheidenden Antheil zu

hesitation was not forgotten by Napoleon. It was Austria's own fault if in the near future he leaned to Prussia even more than formerly. Champagny had occasion to express the resentment of his government to Cobenzl, when the Vice-Chancellor repeated his customary complaints about the partiality of France for Austria's great German rival.

I asked him again [reports the ambassador] whether he considered it obliging on the part of Austria to make of the recognition of the new title of the Emperor of the French a minutely calculated affair, painfully brought to its conclusion, when it would have been possible to arrive at the same result by a more confiding and noble procedure.¹⁷

Russia and Sweden, as might have been expected from their protestations in the Enghien affair, refused point-blank to acknowledge the existence of the new empire. In spite of his professed republicanism, Alexander's vanity was offended by the claim of the Corsican upstart to equality with himself. He used his influence with Austria and Prussia to prevail upon them to refuse their recognition and was so vexed with the former that he declined to recognize the Austrian Empire. Gustavus of Sweden persisted in referring to the new emperor as "Monsieur Napoleon Bonaparte" in his communications to the French minister, until that individual finally asked for his passports.

The most hearty welcome of the change in the French government came from the South German princes. It was only natural that the chief cog in Napoleon's German system should be Bavaria, long a traditional ally of France and a barrier against the advance of Austria upon the Rhine. Attached to France personally and an ardent admirer of her ruler, Maximilian Joseph realized that he owed to her alone his late

gewinnen, den man isoliert durch eigenes Gewicht nicht erringen kann und in Verbindung gegen Frankreich durchaus nicht suchen darf." E. Wertheimer, *Geschichte Oesterreichs und Ungarns im ersten Jahrzehnt des 19. Jahrhunderts* (1884), I, 196.

¹⁷ To Talleyrand, 23 thermidor an XII (Aug. 11, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 375, no. 122.

aggrandizement in the settlement of the German indemnities. Though he was subject to weakness at decisive moments and was partly dominated by his anti-French wife, his policy received form and purpose from his enterprising minister, Montgelas. Bavaria found herself too considerable to admit of passive submission to the dictates of either of the German powers, yet too small to play a rôle of importance. Montgelas therefore aimed to extend her dominions in Franconia and Swabia, as well as to consolidate her territories by the suppression of the multifarious little states of the equestrian order. This could only be done by the assistance of France, for Austria would never tolerate the aggrandizement of a state upon which she herself had often cast covetous eyes.

The second French client in South Germany was the Elector of Baden. By the generosity of the First Consul and the efficiency of his own diplomatists in the art of bribery, this prince had been indemnified with eight times the amount of his losses. Elector Charles Frederick was the most venerable of the German princes, and, though by no means lacking in personality, was now largely dominated by hismorganatic wife, the Countess of Hochberg, and his second son, Prince Louis. The latter was pronouncedly pro-French in tendency, though his influence was here counterbalanced by that of the chief minister, Edelsheim, who gave himself out as a German patriot and had intimate connections with both Austria and Prussia. The French envoy, Massias, often complained of his slights, which were tempered only by his fear of the powerful Republic.¹⁸ In the final analysis, however, Baden, dominated by the guns of Strasbourg, could hardly escape the domination of her great neighbor.

The most interesting of the German princes during the Napoleonic period is without a doubt the Archchancellor, Charles Theodore von Dalberg. As coadjutor to the Archbishop of Mainz he had already played a rôle in Germany before the

¹⁸ Massias to Talleyrand, 26 germinal an XI (April 16, 1804). A.E., BADE, 5, no. 95.

French Revolution, but Mainz had been annexed to France before the death of his predecessor. Yet Dalberg was far too influential among the German princes to be ignored, and the First Consul had deemed it proper to separate him from the secularized prelates, of whom he would have been the natural head, by offering him the opportunity for preservation on the right bank of the Rhine. As Prince Primate of Germany and Electoral Archchancellor, Dalberg presided over the Diet and ruled at Regensburg, a position of sufficient importance to merit the consideration of both France and Austria.

Dalberg is one of those personalities who defy adequate description, for the inconsistencies in his character have brought him little sympathetic understanding from either contemporaries or historians. He was gifted with a brilliant philosophical mind and wide knowledge, but the eccentricities of his spirit prevented the real application or appreciation of his talents. He believed himself called upon to be the moderator of Germany, and it was always possible to gain his coöperation in any project which seemed to fit in with his idea. His patriotism was tempered by a very genuine self-interest, so that one could flatter the former while tempting the latter. As one French diplomat remarked, it would have been decidedly dangerous to abandon this prince to the cajoleries of the court of Vienna.¹⁹ This was very well appreciated by Napoleon, who had perhaps a somewhat exaggerated notion of Dalberg's influence among the other German princes.

The last South German prince of any importance, Frederick of Württemberg, promised to provide more difficulty for French diplomacy than all the rest put together. Frederick was undoubtedly the strongest ruler in Germany, a man of unbending determination, which in personal relations he carried to the point of extreme harshness. He was the uncle of the Tsar and had expected to benefit greatly in the distribution of the indemnities. To gain the added support of the First Consul he

¹⁹ Marandet to Talleyrand, 30 messidor an XI (July 19, 1803). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 179, no. 140.

had personally solicited it in a letter which fairly overflowed with compliments and eulogies:

You are, General First Consul, by the extended power of the great state which you govern, as well as by your personal qualities, in a large part the arbiter of the destinies of Europe. Your powerful intervention and intercession assure the advantage and the happiness of those who are its object. May you be so kind as to accord them for the glory and elevation of my house. . . .²⁰

But Frederick was at that time too well known for his pro-Austrian policies, and his unwillingness to open his money bags had cost him the support of the "personnes essentielles" in the French foreign office. So the share of Württemberg had been disappointingly small in comparison with that of her neighbors, and Frederick had been so vexed that he had opposed the acceptance of the project at St. Petersburg. Since then the relations between Stuttgart and Paris had left much to be desired. The First Consul made it a point to support the Estates of Württemberg in their struggle with the Elector, gave refuge to the Electoral Prince, who had fled the severity of his father, and permitted his envoys to intrigue with Frederick's second son, who was harboring similar intentions.²¹ The Elector, on his part, tolerated the intrigues of Spencer Smith, of whose character he had been fully informed before his arrival at Stuttgart, made a great ado about the seizure of Enghien on German territory, and showed marked reluctance to dismiss the British minister when his activities were brought to the light of day. Napoleon was so dissatisfied with Frederick's sentiments toward France, that he had begun to meditate the

²⁰ May 22, 1802. A.E., WÜRTTEMBERG, 39, no. 8.

²¹ The secretary of the French embassy, Damace Raymond, had several interviews with Prince Paul. Though not encouraging the Prince's plans, Raymond was authorized by Talleyrand to assure him that if he got to France he would be given the same privileges of asylum which his brother then was enjoying. The French took advantage of the occasion to pump Paul on various aspects of the Elector's affairs, especially as to his knowledge of Smith's activities. Report of Damace Raymond, 29 ventôse an XII (March 21, 1804); Talleyrand to Didelot, 7 germinal an XII (March 30, 1804). A.E., WÜRTTEMBERG, 40, nos. 41, 44.

substitution of the errant Electoral Prince for his disagreeable father.

During the summer of 1804, however, the policy of Württemberg took a pronouncedly pro-French turn. The Elector, perennially at odds with his Estates, had refused to confirm their Syndic, a worthy gentleman named Gross. The Estates, vexed by the continual interference with their rights, appealed to the Aulic Council. Austria had formerly been glad to stand aside and let France protect her interests in harassing the Elector and preventing the consolidation of his dominions. It was now necessary to act directly, and on August 16, 1804, the Aulic Council issued a *conclusum* by the terms of which Frederick was required to install the official in question. The reply of the irascible prince was the incarceration of Gross in the fortress of Asberg. Since Austria had now replaced France as the protector of the Estates, the sympathies of the Elector underwent a profound revolution, which was immediately noticed by the French *chargé d'affaires*, Damace Raymond. Frederick and his minister, Wintzingerode, suddenly abounded in complimentary remarks about France and her new Emperor, and even asked for Napoleon's good offices in bringing about a rapprochement between father and son.²² Thus Württemberg seemed well on the way to admission into the French clientele.

William of Hesse-Cassel is the last of the group of secondary princes who can be regarded as in any way within the sphere of French influence. A petty, narrow, and headstrong prince, he held to Prussia even after having seen most of his hopes in the indemnities settlement disappointed by her. A French connection, however, was favored by the energetic minister, Baron Waitz, as well as by the minister at Paris, Starkloff, who took every occasion to represent how much more a French alliance was in accord with the interests of Hesse-Cassel than the one with Prussia. The prospects for gaining the Elector's consent to a more intimate connection with the French sphere of in-

²² Damace Raymond to Talleyrand, 22 fructidor an XII; 2 ventôse an XIII (Sept. 9, 1804; Feb. 21, 1805). *Ibid.*, 40, no. 166; 41, no. 21.

fluence were also much improved by William's delight in the establishment of the Napoleonic Empire. He expressed his enthusiasm to Bignon, then minister to Cassel, and Waitz remarked to the latter: "He is satisfied because you no longer have a First Consul, but an Emperor. What an Emperor is he knows; of a prince he has a clear conception."²³

The policy of the Republic regarding Germany had not taken much form since the period of the indemnities question, for the struggle with England occupied too much of the government's attention. With the death of Latouche-Tréville in August of 1804, however, the project for a descent upon England passed into a stage of inactivity approaching abandonment. The late difficulties with Austria again directed Napoleon's attention to Germany. What rôle was this great impotent mass to play in his political system? Was the policy of France to remain that of the old monarchy — play off the great German powers against one another and thus neutralize the progress of each in turn? This traditional negative conception was represented by Laforest, who composed an exposition on the question when the affair of the indemnities was coming to a close:

The Electoral College will be composed in such a manner that it becomes problematical whether at the death of Francis II the crown will be conserved for his son. There is reason to fear great laceration from the remarkable tendency toward a division of Germany into two parts; this could not but be unfavorable to the French Republic, to whom it is of the utmost importance that the imposing mass of the German nation should ever be incapable of acting vigorously against her. One can hardly prevent this more efficaciously than by assuring the imperial title to the King of Bohemia and Hungary, whose preponderance is today more than counterbalanced. Without doubt it would be but a feeble means of conciliation to suggest that the prince royal (or King of the Romans) be designated in advance.²⁴

The First Consul had no desire to tie his hands in this fashion. To have designated the next emperor would have been

²³ Bitterauf, *Geschichte des Rheinbundes* (1905), p. 130.

²⁴ To Talleyrand, 1 frimaire an XI (Nov. 22, 1802). A.E., ALLEMAGNE, 720, fol. 46-47.

to recognize the indefinite perpetuation of the stately relic now tottering to its grave. Why not oppose to Prussia and Austria a third Germany, standing under the protection of France and ready to be used in her interests? The ambitions and particularistic tendencies of the secondary princes would naturally incline them to such a connection. Even the budding nationalism in the German south and middle states operated in favor of a union from which Prussia and Austria would be excluded. It was the association with the three electoral kings, said many, which was preventing the effective union of the Teutonic peoples into one nation. The rulers of Prussia, Austria, and England were only secondarily interested in the welfare of their German subjects, and the continual struggle of the two former for the preponderance within the Empire was a major factor in keeping Germany weak and disunited. German federative ideas since the Reformation had been undergoing a steady evolution in this direction. Away with the vassalage to one or the other German power; let the states become just German, not pro-Prussian or pro-Austrian!

That a federation which excluded the Hapsburgs, the Hanoverians, and the Hohenzollerns could not be formed without the protection of at least one of the other two powers was self-evident. As the relations between St. Petersburg and Paris left a common mediation out of the question, it was hoped to benefit by French initiative and secure a guarantee from Russia later. The feeling in Germany since the renewal of the war between England and France inclined to a surprising degree to the side of the latter. The resentment at the invasion of North Germany, when all Germans had placed such astonishing faith in the security of North German neutrality, turned largely against England. The British practices at sea during the last war had aroused much sympathy for the cause of France, and nowhere else in Europe was it felt so bitterly or with so much reason that Britain made a practice of inducing other peoples to fight her battles. It was not far from this view to the conviction that Albion was the real disturber of

the peace of Europe.²⁵ Finally, France had usurped the place of the island kingdom as the champion of progress and liberalism; it was now by no means uncommon to designate the state once so praised by the philosophers as an ill-disguised oligarchy.

The idea of a Rhenish union was one of the oldest concepts of French policy and had undergone further delineation during the Revolution. It recurs repeatedly in the correspondence between Talleyrand and Sieyès at the time of the latter's mission to Berlin.²⁶ On the accession of Maximilian Joseph to the throne of Bavaria in February of 1799, Talleyrand had sketched a plan to be presented by the French minister, Alquier, in which the union of the German princes to resist the "aggressions" of Prussia and Austria was outlined. The league would enjoy the protection of France and would be placed under the nominal leadership of the Margrave of Hesse-Cassel. But before the arrival of this dispatch at Munich Alquier had been compelled to quit the city in face of the advancing Austrians, and the project was placed in abeyance for the time being.

In September of 1802, when it seemed as if Austria was about to refuse her consent to the project of indemnities, the First Consul, to compel her submission, brought up the idea of a Fürstenbund on the model of that of pre-revolutionary days. Bonaparte remarked to Lucchesini that Bavaria, then being threatened by the occupation of Passau, ought to be the center of this union, that he was sure of Baden, and that Prussia could make Hesse-Cassel do her bidding. The object of the league would be limited to the guarantee of the plan of indemnities and the insurance of the neutrality of Germany in case of an Austro-French war, which would then be confined

²⁵ There was little response to the British claim that their cause was also that of the states of the Continent. Rather was it felt that they were themselves the rivals of the French for world dominion. One writer expressed this at the time of the renewal of war in 1803: "I do not see in this war a quarrel for a bit of land or for mercantile interests, but a struggle for primacy in the European states system, a renewal of the conflict between Rome and Carthage." W. Stroh, *Das Verhältniss zwischen Frankreich und England in den Jahren 1801-1803 im Urteil der politischen Literatur Deutschlands* (1914), p. 226.

²⁶ Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, I, 485, 498, 499.

to Italy. The Baden minister, Dalberg (nephew of the Arch-chancellor), who reported on these overtures, expected an early invitation from the First Consul to join in the projected association, ". . . which we certainly would accept with eagerness."²⁷ But Bonaparte had shortly thereafter come to terms with the Hofburg.

The real father of the "Rheinbund" idea during the early Napoleonic period was the French envoy at Cassel, Bignon. His active mind hardly found sufficient occupation at the sleepy capital of Elector William; he had leisure to examine the archives of the embassy and became intensely interested in the old Fürstenbund. He formed a close intimacy with Waitz, who may be regarded as the intellectual co-author of the memoranda which Bignon began to submit to Talleyrand. Without foreign intervention, he maintained, all Germany would eventually be absorbed by Prussia or Austria. A union should therefore be formed to the exclusion of Austria, Prussia, and Hanover, protected by the guarantee of France and Russia. Merely as a counterweight to the two German powers such an association would fully conform to the traditional principles of French policy. To these considerations Talleyrand replied in February of 1804 that he had received them with the greatest interest, that the government had often considered similar projects, but that at the time there was too little communication between Paris and Cassel to admit of definite overtures. If the Elector should bring up the matter himself, he should be assured that sooner or later it would be brought to fruition.²⁸

The erection of the French and Austrian Empires did much to further the influence of the former in Germany. The action of the Hofburg was exceedingly unpopular: the patriots were outraged, the small states disquieted, and the sticklers driven to despair trying to figure out the relation of Francis' heredi-

²⁷ Dalberg to Edelsheim, Sept. 16, 1802. In Erdmannsdörffer and Obser, *Pol. Korr. Karl Friedrichs von Baden*, IV, no. 217.

²⁸ Talleyrand's instructions of February 27, 1804, are given by Bignon, *Histoire de France*, IV, 80 ff.

tary empire to that of Rome, to the states of Germany, to each of his dominions, and to the European powers. The Empire of the French, on the other hand, created a favorable impression. The institution of a more stable order in France assured the greater security of any connection between her and the German states, and the personal relationship between Napoleon and his fellow monarchs was placed on a more intimate basis.

It has long been a disputed question as to how far the celebrated meeting of Napoleon with a number of the German princes at Mainz in September of 1804 was the germ of the later Confederation of the Rhine. Some historians have contended that the Emperor summoned his prospective German vassals to Mainz in order to make them proposals of a league of princes under his protection. It now seems that the tentatives for such an association came mostly from the German side, though the bustling Mathieu at one juncture came forward with a scheme of his own. Of the secondary princes only the Elector of Baden and the Archchancellor were directly invited, though the others were informally notified that anyone who wished to "*faire sa cour*" to the new Caesar would be welcome.²⁹ Much has been said about the unwillingness of the individual princes to go to Mainz, but when we consider each case individually it does not appear that this occurred from an aversion either to meeting Napoleon or to compromising themselves with France. Frederick of Württemberg, whose recent irritation against Austria had inclined him to the side of France for the first time since his accession, would have been anxious to come, for he now hoped to win the support of France in the quarrel with his Estates. His representative, Bühler, told the French chargé d'affaires before leaving Stuttgart that ". . . the Elector would have been glad to go to Mainz himself if he had received an invitation, or if he could have been sure that no one else received any." But the fact that Charles Frederick and the Archchancellor had been bidden

²⁹ Talleyrand to Otto, 18 fructidor an XII (Sept. 5, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 139.

personally would not permit the proud prince to accept the more informal summons.³⁰

Maximilian Joseph of Bavaria had every reason to cling to France because of the precarious state of his relations with Austria, but the annual review of his army had been set for the 30th of September, and the expense of keeping 15,000 troops near Munich for twelve extra days would have been prohibitive. He sugared the pill of his refusal by promising to come to the imperial coronation and saying in the presence of the Austrian minister that he looked forward to finding his troops in good order, so that they might be "*worthy to serve under Napoleon.*"³¹ At Cassel William hesitated in spite of the urgings of Bignon, who had been instructed by Talleyrand to take advantage of a previous pledge of the Elector's to visit the French court. It is probable enough that he would have yielded if it had not been for the advice of Archchancellor Dalberg. The two princes had had a conference at Philippsruhe, where the question of the proposed league had been fully discussed. Dalberg at that time did not intend to go to Mainz, where, as he wrote to Napoleon, "each stone and every house recalled to him his native city." If the Emperor desired a meeting, he would be delighted to come to him at any other place. In his irritation the Chancellor also advised William not to go. The idea of a new Fürstenbund he considered "fort utile," and he would mention it to the Emperor if he did go to meet him. In any case, one might make the proposition to Baden, which might then send Prince Louis to St. Petersburg to negotiate the Russian end of the guarantee.³² The Hessian took his advice and was prevented by a diplomatic illness from appearing at Mainz, but in the end the repeated solicitation of Napoleon prevailed upon Dalberg to overcome his sentimental prejudices.

³⁰ Damace Raymond to Talleyrand, 2 complémentaire an XII (Sept. 19, 1804). A.E., WÜRTTEMBERG, 40, no. 173.

³¹ Otto to Talleyrand, 26 fructidor an XII (Sept. 13, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 140.

³² Dalberg to Edelsheim, Sept. 7 and 8, 1804. Erdmannsdörffer and Obser, *Pol. Korr. Karl Friedrichs von Baden*, V, nos. 139, 140.

Charles Frederick of Baden showed the greatest reluctance of all the German princes to accept the invitation tendered him by the French Emperor. A year before, on hearing of a projected voyage of the First Consul through the eastern departments, he had himself taken the initiative in suggesting a meeting at Mainz.³³ Bonaparte had then decided not to make the trip, and the situation was now considerably changed. While Baden had shown her readiness to accommodate France in every way to prevent an unpleasant aftermath to the affair of Ettenheim, she could not escape being offended by the ruthless violation of her territory. The Margravine Amalie and several of the ministers now urged that some pretext be sought to escape the undesired encounter, but the advice of Prince Louis and Edelsheim carried the day.

Comparatively little is known about this first of the great Napoleonic assemblages of princes. The *procès-verbal* drawn up by Talleyrand deals only with ceremonial and visits of state, without giving any information about the political discussions which undoubtedly took place.³⁴ The communications between the sovereigns and their intimates were exclusively verbal. Both Charles Frederick and the Archchancellor were accompanied by their principal ministers and counselors, the same being the case with the horde of little princelings who crowded into Mainz. All the French ministers with whom Talleyrand might have corresponded regarding the political features of the occasion had come themselves to pay their court to the Emperor. Thus almost no record remains of what really took place, and the few retrospective comments made by those who were present throw but a meager light thereon.

The wildest rumors were current in Germany and throughout Europe regarding the negotiations which were supposed to be going on at Mainz. At Vienna particular anxiety was created by the presence of Mathieu, whose participation in any

³³ Edelsheim to Talleyrand, July 7, 1803. A.E., BADE, 6, no. 131.

³⁴ *Procès-verbal de la réception de LL. AA. SS. l'Électeur Archichancelier et l'Électeur de Bade à Mayence, 4 complémentaire an XII (Sept. 21, 1804).* A.E., BADE, 6, no. 213.

discussion was usually assumed to portend important changes in Germany. It was now claimed that he intended to propose a plan by which the left bank of the Rhine would be returned to the Empire and erected into an electorate for Napoleon. In this fashion it would be possible for him to become Holy Roman Emperor by constitutional proceedings at some future date.³⁵ Lucchesini later expressed his conviction that the question of an association of German princes had been discussed at length between the Emperor and Dalberg.³⁶ Hardenberg entertained similar suspicions.

In reality very little of so far-reaching a nature was considered at Mainz. Bignon came to the meeting with a number of "observations," which recommended the time as favorable for starting his project among a few of the princes; the rest would follow very quickly and Russia would be sure to grant her protection at some future date. Yet he says himself that it never came to more than "*indirectement quelques paroles*" on the subject.³⁷ Dalberg later told the Hessian minister, Gayling, that Napoleon had approved in principle a plan for a union of electors and more important princes.³⁸ There is no definite proof of more serious discussions' having taken place. Napoleon himself probably did not feel in a position to suggest anything specific for the time being; the main purpose of the meeting for him apparently was to become better acquainted with the South German princes and to draw them more closely

³⁵ Gemmingen (minister of Baden at Vienna) to Edelsheim, Sept. 26 and Oct. 3, 1804. Erdmannsdörffer and Obser, *Pol. Korr. Karl Friedrichs von Baden*, vol. V, nos. 192, 193.

³⁶ "Comme il [Dalberg] témoigne un grand attachement à la constitution germanique, on tache de flatter son amour propre, en le consultant sur les moyens de mettre désormais cette constitution à l'abri des empiétements ultérieurs des puissances de l'Allemagne. C'est dans une telle disposition des esprits que soit avoir pris naissance en projet d'union entre plusieurs cours électorales, dont je ne saurais plus douter, qu'il n'ait été question entre l'Empereur et l'Électeur Archichancelier dans leur entrevue à Mayence." Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, 320.

³⁷ Bignon, *Histoire de France*, V, 300.

³⁸ K. Obser, "Ein Tagebuch über die Zusammenkunft des Kurfürsten Karl Friedrich von Baden mit Napoleon in Mainz, September, 1804," *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins*, LIII (1899), 613.

into his system.³⁹ In this respect it was an undoubted success. Charles Frederick of Baden again came to look to France for the aggrandizement of his house; it is certain that Napoleon promised to increase his dominions at the earliest possible opportunity by the addition of Breisgau and declared it a great mistake to have allowed Austria this foothold on the Rhine.⁴⁰

The relations between Napoleon and Dalberg were all that either could have asked. The Archchancellor left Mainz filled with enthusiasm for the Emperor, who had been particularly charming to him. It seems that Napoleon took a real liking to Dalberg, who was a brilliant figure personally, and whose importance as the leader of the Diet he probably overrated. As a man who stood in a position of neutrality between Austria and Prussia and desired the independence of the rest of Germany, the Prince Primate was the ideal person to serve as the high priest and prophet of the association of German princes which he had himself suggested at Mainz.

In January of 1805 Russia was for the first time officially approached by one of the interested states. On the command of his impatient master, Waitz wrote a letter to Alopeus, the Russian ambassador at Berlin, presenting a vague outline of the Hessian project, and stating that the Prince Primate had found occasion while at Paris to ascertain the favorable sentiments of Napoleon and Talleyrand.⁴¹ Alopeus immediately communicated this epistle to the Prussian foreign minister, Hardenberg, and the Austrian ambassador, Metternich, who

³⁹ On October 4 Friedrich Stadion, then the favorite candidate of the Archchancellor for his coadjutorship, wrote of his patron: "Il est persuadé qu'il ne s'est point fait d'affaires réelles à Mayence, et que tout ce qui s'est dit à cet égard, et tout ce qui a été annoncé d'avance, n'a été que pour rassembler un plus grand nombre de Princes et d'autres personnes de distinction et de faire paroître au cette Cour plénière la grandeur de l'Empereur Napoléon dans un plus grand état aux yeux de la France et de l'Allemagne; . . . Herbert Bastgen, *Dalberg und Napoleons Kirchenpolitik in Deutschland* (1917), p. 71.

⁴⁰ In the "Diarium über den Aufenthalt des Kurprinzen und des Markgrafen Louis in Paris" of December 4, which discusses the attendance of the Baden princes at Napoleon's coronation, the Emperor is reported as repeating these pledges, "already made at Mainz." Erdmannsdörffer and Obser, *Pol. Korr. Karl Friedrichs von Baden*, V, no. 176.

⁴¹ Jan. 16, 1804. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Jan.-April), fol. 57-58.

were considerably upset about what they considered proof of a new French intrigue. Against whom was this projected union directed, and just what did the two electors aspire to? Alopeus replied to Waitz that he did not consider the project as one which would merit the Tsar's protection,⁴² a pronouncement so categorical as to bring about the temporary renunciation of the plan by the interested German princes.

Napoleon had not succeeded in securing the much-desired presence of Maximilian Joseph of Bavaria at his coronation. For a time the Elector had hesitated, calling upon his ministers at the three principal continental courts for advice. Of these only Cetto fully recommended the trip, saying that otherwise it would be difficult to expect further favors from France. The ministers at Vienna and St. Petersburg (Gravenreuth and Posch) hinted that it was hardly in keeping with the dignity of a born sovereign to attend the coronation of a usurper. The Elector was further influenced by the approaching accouchement of the Electrice, which gave him a great deal of anxiety. Montgelas told Otto that he had urged his master to put family interests aside, but that the sentimental ruler would not go without his wife.⁴³ Whether the prince's final decision to remain at Munich was motivated by his conjugal affection or his pride, his refusal to attend the coronation did not portend a diversion of Bavaria from the steady pro-French policy she was now pursuing. It was at this very time that Montgelas revealed to the French minister his conception of the proper organization of the Germanic body. Austria, he said, should be driven from Swabia and forced to devote herself to a "*système hongroise*." Prussia should also be considered foreign to the reorganized Germany, while the remaining states ought to form a sort of independent republic.⁴⁴ This view of the league

⁴² From two dispatches of Metternich of Jan. 22, 1804. S-A., PREUSSEN, fol. 46-50.

⁴³ Otto to Talleyrand, 22 vendémiaire an XII (Oct. 14, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 141.

⁴⁴ Otto to Talleyrand, 7 nivôse an XII (Dec. 28, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 159.

of princes could hardly satisfy Napoleon, but it expressed sentiments which might serve as a basis for coöperation in a struggle to oust the Hapsburgs from Germany.

With the establishment of his dynasty on the throne of France, it was only natural that Napoleon should seek a more intimate acceptance into the family of sovereigns by marriage alliances with other rulers. The international situation, such as it was in 1804, prohibited a connection with the reigning family of any of the powers. Of the great houses of Germany the Wittelsbachs were among the most illustrious and the most ancient, and an alliance with them would give much-needed prestige to the upstart Bonapartes. As early as June of 1804 Napoleon had demanded of Otto a full report on the electoral family. The minister in his reply had devoted much praise to the seventeen-year-old Augusta, then considered the handsomest princess in Germany.⁴⁵ Soon after, he had been instructed to approach Montgelas on the question of a union between her and the Emperor's stepson, Eugene Beauharnais. Montgelas had at first shown some surprise at this overture, but he soon came to perceive the advantage of such a connection for Bavaria and urged it most vigorously upon his master. Unfortunately, the Elector had just broken off a projected marriage between his daughter and the Crown Prince of Mecklenburg-Schwerin in order to arrange one with the Electoral Prince of Baden. All the urgings and even the menaces of Otto could not prevail upon him to break off an engagement in which he declared his honor, as well as the affections of his daughter, to be involved.⁴⁶

But Napoleon was not to be put off so easily; he now turned to Baden and demanded that the marriage be broken off by Charles Frederick. Prince Louis of Baden was approached during the period of his stay at Paris, and he promised quite readily to do what he could to accommodate the Emperor. On

⁴⁵ Otto to Napoleon, 29 messidor an XII (July 18, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, supplément 11, no. 79.

⁴⁶ Correspondence between Talleyrand and Otto. *Ibid.*, supplément 180, nos. 82-95.

returning to Carlsruhe, however, the prince found that the marriage negotiations with Bavaria had proceeded far beyond the point he had anticipated. Both Louis and the Elector wrote personally to the Emperor, expressing their exceeding regret at the situation. Bavaria had broken off the Mecklenburg-Schwerin alliance and rejected two other suitors to accept the Electoral Prince. It was hardly up to Baden to make the first overtures for a renunciation of the arrangement. If Napoleon could prevail upon Maximilian Joseph to make the first suggestions toward that end, Baden would be glad to make the required sacrifice.⁴⁷ With this Napoleon was forced to content himself, and another year was to pass before the astounding successes of the war of the Third Coalition opened a way to the family alliances he had so much at heart.

The French Empire at the end of the year 1804 enjoyed an exceedingly strong position upon the Continent. Holland, Switzerland, and most of Italy remained in the firm grip of the new Caesar; South Germany was becoming a recognized part of his sphere of influence. The continental system had already received its foundations; British goods were excluded from the Adriatic to the North Sea, and British intrigue had been confined within narrow limits. Austria, though encouraged by the belligerent attitude of Russia, would not risk a war unless threatened anew in her vital interests. Napoleonic diplomacy would have every advantage in dealing with either of the German powers, and as long as they could be prevented from entering a coalition France was safe upon the Continent, for Russia could approach her only through one or the other.

The year 1804 receives added significance in the history of Napoleonic diplomacy by the steadily increasing opposition between Napoleon and Talleyrand. As yet this was not so much due to a divergence of view upon questions of policy, but to an increasing personal distaste of the Emperor for his minister. Talleyrand's loyalty had already become suspect; one

⁴⁷ Charles Frederick to Napoleon; Prince Louis to Napoleon and to Talleyrand, Jan. 16, 1805. A.E., BADE, I, fol. 240-246.

view has it that the execution of Enghien had been urged by him in order to prove to the First Consul that he was still devoted to him and the Revolution.⁴⁸ His minister's venality had long aroused the disgust and contempt of Napoleon, who made it a point to taunt him about it on various occasions.⁴⁹ The full extent of the corruption existing in the foreign department, however, did not force itself upon the attention of the Emperor until about the time of his coronation. The presence of a large number of German princelings with their usual claims and complaints promised another golden harvest for those who had won riches during the settlement of the German indemnities. But Hauterive, who had long been indignant at the bad name enjoyed by the department, now finally decided to act. Without the knowledge of the minister of the exterior, he managed to convey to the Emperor a memorandum, setting out the disgraceful condition of affairs and naming Mathieu and Durand as the chief offenders. The time was exceedingly well chosen, for he had the best kind of argument in the recent affair of the Saarbrücken princesses. These worthy ladies, who had lost their territories on the left bank of the Rhine, had promised Talleyrand and those who had the most influence with him a sum of 600,000 francs, the half of which was paid down. Talleyrand had been so well engaged in the matter, that he corrected in his own hand the memoranda on the question which were presented to the Emperor. But the sequestration had not been lifted, and the interested parties demanded the return of their bribe. One of the ladies had been so indiscreet as to make her request in writing, the note falling into Napoleon's hands. Talleyrand was overwhelmed with reproaches and threats

⁴⁸ Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution française*, vol. VI, no. 346-347.

⁴⁹ Concerning the venality of Talleyrand the diplomatic world of Paris had much to say. Thus Whitworth is reported by the Prefecture of Police to have remarked that he and his henchmen could only be approached "l'argent à la main." Report of Feb. 18, 1803. Aulard, *Paris sous le Consulat*, III, 676. A very full discussion is in Lacour-Gayet, *Talleyrand*, II, 71-79. We read of an estimate of over fifteen million francs as his gains from July 1800 to February 1801, chiefly out of Spanish matters and the making of the Peace of Luneville. The German indemnities are said to have yielded him an equal sum.

and was generally regarded as having lost credit. Durand was shunted off as minister to Saxony. Mathieu asked for his dismissal, but his intimate knowledge of German affairs made him indispensable. A strict injunction was issued to the members of the department of the exterior, prohibiting them from having any intercourse with foreigners and warning them to allow only Frenchmen to be seen at their houses.⁵⁰ Talleyrand was required to fashion a circular note to the ministers and ambassadors of France at all foreign capitals, requiring them to receive gifts only provisionally, saying that authorization for acceptance had to be obtained in each case.⁵¹ The rumors regarding the dismissal of Talleyrand, already frequent during the previous summer, multiplied, but the minister of the exterior was still too indispensable to permit such summary retirement. In the great diplomatic campaign of 1805 he was still to have a share.

⁵⁰ The bulk of our information on this matter comes from the "Diarium über den Aufenthalt des Kurprinzen und des Markgrafen Ludwig in Paris." The Badenese were so much interested in the question because they had come to Paris with the intention of using the customary channels of bribery. They were anxious to secure the favor of France in the controversies over the Palatinate debts and over the Austrian sequestration of the funds of secularized institutions in the Bank of Vienna. On arriving at the French capital, they were surprised to find that there was no hope of communicating with their former intimates in the department of the exterior. Erdmannsdörffer and Obser, *Pol. Korr. Karl Friedrichs von Baden*, V, no. 176.

⁵¹ Circulaire of the 5 nivôse an XIII (Dec. 26, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, supplément 11, fol. 137.

PART IV

THE FORMATION OF THE THIRD COALITION

CHAPTER XV

THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN ALLIANCE

ALTHOUGH the relations between France and Russia had been decidedly lacking in amiability throughout the latter part of the year 1803, there had been no occasion for an outright estrangement until the beginning of 1804. The ostensible cause of the increasing unfriendliness lay in the French violation of the secret treaty of October 10, 1801, by the terms of which the First Consul had promised to respect the neutrality of the King of Naples. But while Russia was fundamentally opposed to French hegemony in Italy, her interests in that peninsula were not of so vital a nature as to justify an armed conflict in their behalf. Alexander and his advisers were much more disturbed at the Republic's threat of expansion toward the East, for Russia was more than ever determined to be the sole heir of the Ottoman Empire; after the death of Paul I the idea of partition was never more than a last resort. For this reason the repeated insinuations of the First Consul for an accord on the basis of the spoliation of the Turk had been categorically rejected, and the Tsar had come more and more to adopt pro-English views in the dispute which ended in the rupture of the Peace of Amiens.

Late in the fall of the year 1803 Simon Woronzov received a communication from his brother, at that time still Chancellor, which has been regarded with much justice as the first step in the formation of the Third Coalition. The cabinet of St. Petersburg, said the dispatch, had just received definite information to the effect that the First Consul intended to disembark troops on the coasts of Morea and Albania. Such a move was sure to portend an attempt to overthrow the Porte and reconquer Egypt. This Russia was determined to oppose with all the means at her command, and she was anxious to ascertain what measures England would be prepared to undertake for the

same end. A number of preliminary steps were suggested. Some of the frigates from Nelson's Mediterranean squadron might be detached to cruise among the Ionian Islands, while the English agent at Corfu could be supplied with money and authorized to concert with the Russian representative, Moncenigo, on what "*mesures conservatrices*" were possible.¹

These overtures show how ready the statesmen of St. Petersburg were to enter into a combination with the Briton as soon as they considered the Ottoman Empire threatened by France. The change in the Russian foreign department in January of 1804 brought with it a further increase in the anti-French tendencies of Russian policy. The elder Woronzov, although hostile enough to France, had always represented the "old Russian" inclination for a minimum of participation in western affairs. He was now succeeded by the fiery Polish prince, Adam Czartoryski, who soon instilled new life and, incidentally, new ambitions into Russian policy. The dream of the young minister was to restore the ancient kingdom of Poland and to associate it with a pan-Slavic empire under the rule of the Tsar. To further this policy he considered essential the destruction of Prussia, the defeat of France, and alliances with Great Britain and Austria. Like most Poles, Czartoryski was far more resentful of the partition of his native land than he would have been of mere annexation to Russia. A united Poland, connected with Russia only in the person of its sovereign, would permit every Polish patriot to hold up his head. But Prussia remained in possession of the very heart of the ancient kingdom, and nothing short of war could possibly prevail upon her to relinquish it. Austria's share of Poland was not nearly so desirable in her eyes, and there was every prospect of acquiring it through negotiation if adequate compensation were offered. Italian, German, and possibly even Turkish territories could be used as bait to entice her into a Russian alliance.²

¹ The dispatch under date of November 20, 1804, is given in full by J. H. Rose, *Napoleonic Studies*, p. 365.

² "Observations secrètes" of Czartoryski. F. Martens, *Recueil des traités* . . . *conclus par la Russie*, II, 400.

France needed to be curbed because of her threatening attitude towards Turkey. The encounter might be avoided by a division of the spoils, but to give Napoleon a foothold in the Balkans threatened the eventual extension of his control over the entire peninsula. A French war was therefore looked upon as more than probable by the opening of 1804. Czartoryski's plans regarding the division of Prussia, however, were not yet looked upon with favor, for the Tsar was still too much under the spell of the Memel interview to be easily turned against his Berlin friends.

In January proposals for an alliance were made to Austria. They went so far as to outline a full plan of action, though war was only to be declared if Napoleon made hostile demonstrations against either Holstein or Morea. The first indications of a plan to force Prussia into the alliance were also contained therein.³ Austria was placed in a most embarrassing position: if she accepted the offer, war would probably result, while a categorical refusal might permanently antagonize the Tsar. She was little concerned with the safety of Holstein or even the Morea — such a basis hardly corresponded to her interests. But Russia must under no circumstances be offended; Austria had tasted the bitter fruit of isolation for too many years to reject the only hand which was offered to her on the Continent. A middle course was therefore adopted, the negotiations being protracted but no definite answer given. This method of procedure, long characteristic of Austrian diplomacy, promised the most for a state which did not feel itself strong enough to precipitate a conflict, nor could afford to risk the loss of an alliance which might yet become its last resort.

The understanding between Russia and England was not as easy to accomplish as one would be inclined to suppose. In the final analysis the only bond of union was the common hatred

³ In a dispatch to Rasumovsky of July 1805 Czartoryski frankly revealed the current of his thought. As Prussia could in no way be induced to part peaceably from her Polish possessions, she is to be compelled to do so. In fact, Prussian territory (Silesia) is to indemnify Austria for the renunciation of Galicia. Bavaria is to help round out this consolation prize for Austria. *Ibid.*, II, 478.

and fear of France. England was justly apprehensive of Russia's own views upon the Ottoman Empire. As on the Continent, the Muscovite was distrusted as an ally, and this may have been one of the reasons why the Addington ministry showed so little energy in seeking an understanding with St. Petersburg. Malmsbury, one of the chief supporters of the idea that the war with France could only be brought to a successful conclusion if allies were gained on the Continent, had expressed himself quite frankly on this point when Whitworth was still in France:

Russia is now what she ever has been since she has held or assumed a place among the great powers of Europe — cajoling them all, and courting flattery from all, but certainly never meaning to take an active part on behalf of any of them. . . . I fear we rely too much upon her; she will certainly do nothing; she will give us advice, but not assistance, and is now playing the game as she has played it since the accession of the late Empress Catherine.⁴

Such sentiments were shared by many Englishmen. Secure from invasion herself and ruled by a capricious autocrat, Russia had slipped out of embarrassing associations more than once and left her friends to hold the bag. With a change of rulers there was every chance of a change of policy; Britain herself had gained too much by the last one not to appreciate the unpleasant possibilities in this situation. Under such circumstances it hardly seemed worth while to make too great sacrifices to secure an alliance which would, moreover, be of no use whatever until the adhesion of one of the German powers was obtained.

The Russians in turn were for some time discouraged from considering an alliance because of their lack of faith in the government of Addington and Hawkesbury. Ever since the institution of this ministry Simon Woronzov had assumed a bitterly hostile and critical attitude in regard to it. The memoirs and diaries of English contemporaries are cluttered with the contemptuous remarks which he allowed himself to express on

⁴ April 27, 1803. Malmsbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, 252-253.

every occasion. That Woronzov's dispatches were similarly colored goes without saying, and, though he was a rabid supporter of the idea of an Anglo-Russian alliance, the project can hardly have been advanced by his contemptuous treatment of the British ministers and the impressions he conveyed to his government regarding their character and capabilities.⁵ It is not surprising that in a personal letter from Alexander to his ambassador in August of 1803 the Emperor expressed his regret that there was not more prospect of the return of Pitt to power, as he (Alexander) had no confidence whatever in the men governing the country, who were known throughout Europe for their imbecility.⁶

The British ambassador at St. Petersburg, Admiral Warren, did not enjoy much greater repute in the Russian capital than did the men who sent him his instructions. He was described by Woronzov as a man entirely occupied with his own interests and very little with those of England, who gambled from morning till night and allowed affairs to take their own course.⁷ In spite of this, Warren showed greater energy than his superiors in seeking an understanding with Russia. George Jackson speaks of him as being ". . . very disappointed that the government have not turned their thoughts to St. Petersburg with the earnestness he expected. For the numerous couriers he had dispatched, rarely one has been sent back."⁸

⁵ It might be interesting to compare Woronzov's judgment of the British ministers with that of Andréossy. In a dispatch to the First Consul of March 16, 1803, he says: "M. Addington est religieux, honnête, prové, estimé; il a un caractère ferme, mais point d'audace dans l'esprit, et son extraction le laisse sans appui de famille. Lord Hawkesbury est plus jeune, a quelque talens; sa famille commence une espèce d'illustration par les places et par les alliances; il est ambitieux, mais timide; des vues très bornées; entortillé dans sa politique, embarrassé dans ses communications; en un mot, n'ayant aucune des qualités d'un homme d'état. M. Addington tient à sa place par honneur, Lord Hawkesbury par intérêt." A.N., AF IV, 1672, Plaque I, fol. 134-136.

⁶ George Rose, *Diaries and Correspondence*, II, 42. The vehemence of the Tsar's language may have been somewhat exaggerated by Woronzov, who communicated his expressions to George Rose, for the Russian ambassador was ever trying to prepare the way for the return of Pitt.

⁷ Lady Bessborough to Lord Gower, Aug. 1, 1804. Gower, *Private Correspondence*, I, 460. ⁸ March 25, 1804. Jackson, *Diaries and Letters*, I, 185.

In the spring of 1804 there occurred two events which were to be of great importance in bringing Russia and England together: the execution of Enghien and the return of Pitt to the head of the government. The latter instilled with greater energy the efforts of the British to gain allies upon the Continent. A definite offer of subsidies was without delay made to Russia; the plan also contained a scale of premiums to be paid to Prussia, Sweden, or any other power which might be persuaded to join the coalition.⁹ Czartoryski spoke of the sum (£1,000,000) as "nugatory," and insisted that it would be necessary to "define the objects and points upon which a sound peace might be established."

The apprehensions of the Court of St. James, however, were soon allayed by the withdrawal of Oubril from Paris.¹⁰ The negotiations between Russia and England thereupon took on a more steady and decided tone. Early in November, Novosiltzov, a diplomat of the younger school and a well-known Anglophile, came to London with full power to treat with the British ministry on the subject of an alliance. The chief difficulties lay in the matter of the amount of subsidies the British were to furnish. Gustavus of Sweden, who was to be included in the coalition, made the usual amount of difficulty, demanding pecuniary assistance to an extent which the number of troops he was able to furnish entirely failed to justify. Most embarrassing of all to his prospective allies was his insistence upon the restoration of the Bourbons as the primary essential of any peace. To bring him to reason Lord Harrowby hoped to enlist the support of the Swedish minister at Vienna, General Armfeld. The instructions given Paget on the point are of some significance in showing the attitude of the Pitt government regarding the war with France.

⁹ Lord Harrowby (successor to Hawkesbury) to Count Simon Woronzov, June 26, 1804. J. H. Rose, *The Formation of the Third Coalition against France, 1804-1805* (1904), no. 8.

¹⁰ This had been preceded by the presentation of an ultimatum meant to be unacceptable, demanding as it did the evacuation of Naples and North Germany and a complete rearrangement of the affairs of Italy. Warren to Harrowby, Aug. 14. *Ibid.*, no. 18.

You will take occasion to explain to Baron Armfeld the reasons, founded upon public opinion of this country, which must prevent the King from making the restoration of the House of Bourbon the declared object of the war; and you will endeavor through him to persuade His Swedish Majesty that the best method of accomplishing the restoration of the House of Bourbon is to diminish the influence and tarnish the reputation of Bonaparte; that this can only be effected by a successful contest against his military superiority; that no impression can be made upon it except by the coalition of several of the great states of the continent; and that a union for the express purpose of dethroning Bonaparte cannot be expected to take place amongst those whom fear has compelled to acknowledge him as Emperor. . . . The conclusion from this reasoning would be that his only chance of ultimately obtaining his object would be a cordial concurrence in the pursuit of ours — viz., the diminution of the exorbitant power of France.¹¹

Napoleon had in the meantime through his secret agents got wind of the true purpose of Novosiltzov's mission. In the opinion of John Holland Rose, it was the knowledge of the coalition forming against him which now prevailed upon him to write the second of his celebrated New Year's letters to George III.¹² Of greater influence was probably the fact that the descent project was then at its lowest ebb and that there seemed little opportunity of satisfying the nation that the enormous sacrifices made for it had not been in vain. Since the return of Pitt to power the chances of a favorable peace for France had been much decreased. Up to the moment of his elevation the situation had still been very encouraging for the Republic. It was generally believed that the death or renewed insanity of George III was imminent. In either case it was assumed that Fox, who had just gone to the length of making an indirect overture to the French government, would come into power. The Bavarian minister at London, Pfeffel, being obliged to return to Munich because of the expulsion of Drake, Fox and other members of the opposition seized the occasion to convey to him their hopes that they would be able

¹¹ Aug. 31, 1804. *Pagel Papers*, II, 145-146.

¹² J. H. Rose, *William Pitt and the Great War* (1911), p. 516.

to take advantage of the ministerial crisis to force the government to renew the negotiations for peace. Fox personally requested Pfeffel to inform Otto, that is, the French government, of his sentiments, and an intimate friend of the Whig leader made the Bavarian promise to write to him concerning "Otto's opinions" on the eventual bases of peace. The French envoy at Munich took care to report upon this to Talleyrand, who instructed him to say in his future conversations with Pfeffel that, the war having been started by England, it was up to her to take the first step toward the re-establishment of peace: As for the terms upon which one might try to come to an understanding, it is evident that, the war having begun only a few months after the conclusion of the Treaty of Amiens, it is this treaty to which one must return, and France will always be justified in demanding that it be taken as the basis of any new transactions.¹³

The stubborn ruler, however, not only insisted upon recovering, but just then made a declaration that even at the hazard of a civil war he would never consent to the admission of Fox into his councils. All hope of working through the Whigs was thus gone for the time being, but Napoleon now felt it desirable to make in his turn the preliminary overture which he had declared would have to come from England. If **John Bull** entered into a direct and separate negotiation everything would be well; if he rejected such a public plea for peace the French people would again be convinced that the **Emperor** had done his best to close the temple of Janus. On January 14 Lord Mulgrave, who had now succeeded Harrowby, replied to Napoleon's communication. His Majesty entertained the liveliest desire for the restoration of peace, ran the note, but an agreement could be reached only on such a basis as insured the future security and tranquillity of Europe. It would be necessary to postpone ". . . any more particular answer until he has had time to communicate with those powers on the con-

¹³ Otto to Talleyrand, 29 prairial; Talleyrand to Otto, 17 messidor an XII (June 18 and July 6, 1804). A.E., BAYÈRE, 180, nos. 96, 108.

continent with whom he is engaged in confidential intercourse and connection, and especially the Emperor of Russia, who has given the strongest proof of the wise and dignified sentiments by which he is animated."¹⁴ This was as much as a categorical refusal to consider negotiating at the time, and no further efforts were made by either country to approach the other until after the overthrow of the Third Coalition.

The negotiations at London and St. Petersburg now went on at a rapid pace, for both England and Russia were determined on war unless, as was scarcely credible, Napoleon should in the end prove willing to make such concessions that his sphere outside of France would be definitely restricted. After a number of projects had been modified or rejected, a treaty of alliance was finally signed at St. Petersburg on April 11, 1805. Napoleon was to be obliged to renounce all his conquests since the Peace of Amiens, while England was to retain Malta. The island kingdom pledged itself to pay subsidies to the extent of £1,250,000 for each 100,000 men put into the field by its allies.¹⁵ There were a number of verbal understandings supplementary to the treaty. If France resisted and was defeated, a large part of northern Italy would go to the King of Sardinia. If Prussia proved sufficiently docile and entered the coalition, she would receive a considerable share of the German districts on the left bank of the Rhine and become a barrier against future French aggression in this direction.¹⁶ Novosiltzov was to go to Paris to deliver a final ultimatum, the purpose of this mission being to place the responsibility of the war on Napoleon.¹⁷ It was also intended as a coup which would draw Prussia into the alliance.

This brief sketch of the formation of the Anglo-Russian alliance, which formed the basis of the Third Coalition, must serve as a background for the relation of the two great German

¹⁴ A.E., ANGLETERRE, 602, no. 84.

¹⁵ Text in G. de Martens, *Recueil des traités*, VII, 330-341.

¹⁶ Lord G. Leveson Gower (successor of Warren) to Harrowby. J. H. Rose, *Formation of the Third Coalition*, no. 71.

¹⁷ Gower to Mulgrave, March 22, 1804. *Ibid.*, no. 69.

powers to the new combination against Napoleon. The diplomacy of the French Emperor has hardly been referred to in this connection, for the part which he played here was a relatively insignificant one. Even before the execution of Enghien the eventuality of such an alliance had been a matter of comparative certainty, and there was little or nothing which Napoleon could still have done to prevent it, save the renunciation of what he had gained since the Peace of Amiens, or even that of Luneville. Such a course could hardly be expected from the recently crowned Caesar.

That the attack made upon him by Russia was a crusade of pure idealism is no longer contended. The Tsar certainly had visions of relieving the weak and oppressed among the states of Europe, but in the end his hostility to France was based on offended vanity and the desire to protect and extend Russia's interest in the Near East. In the negotiations between England and Russia lands and peoples were used as pawns with as little respect as they were by the Corsican, and the alliance to which they gave birth was founded as much upon selfish interests as on the aim of restoring the equilibrium of Europe. It would assume consequence only if one of the German powers became a party, and it is here that Napoleonic diplomacy again plays a major rôle.

CHAPTER XVI

THE AUSTRIAN DECISION

THE controversial attitude of Austria toward the establishment of the Empire had not tended to improve relations between Paris and Vienna. It was now flung up to Cobenzl by Champagny every time the former ventured complaints about the partiality of France for Prussia. Napoleon had come to suspect that the Hofburg was only waiting for a favorable opportunity to attack him, and this view was soon to play an important rôle in the formulation of his policy. He was, however, too well acquainted with the confusion in her affairs to fear any move against him during the year 1804. "It would not only be folly for Austria to raise the standard of revolt," he wrote to Talleyrand in the summer, "it would be absolutely impossible, be it alone or with the help of Russia."¹

Austria, however, was even less anxious for war than Napoleon suspected. Her resources were at their lowest ebb, and she knew that without assistance she would be no match for France. Even if assured adequate financial and military help, she would probably not take up arms unless threatened in one of her vital interests. The point where she felt herself most exposed was Italy, where some kind of coup on the part of the French appeared to be pending. The change of government in France made inevitable a corresponding evolution in that of the Italian Republic. Cobenzl felt that Napoleon's treatment of Italy ought to be the touchstone upon which Austria's future policy depended.² An attempt to bind Lombardy more closely to France would threaten the future in-

¹ Aug. 20, 1804. *Corr.*, IX, no. 7946.

² In a memorandum of September 1, 1804, Cobenzl writes: "Le sort futur de la République italienne nous paraît être à cet égard la pierre de touche de ce que l'Europe aura à craindre ou à espérer des vues ultérieures du nouvel Empereur des Français." Given complete by Fournier, *Gentz und Cobenzl*, pp. 293-299.

dependence of the whole of the peninsula, as well as Austria's possession of Venetia. Cobenzl was convinced that nothing was to be hoped from negotiations; he had learned by bitter experience that Napoleon would never permit himself to be restricted by diplomatic formulae. A policy of watchful waiting, while preserving the thread which ran to St. Petersburg, seemed to offer the least likelihood of danger.

The assurances of Napoleon, that he would view favorably any advance which Austria made by the path of negotiation or moral influence in Germany, offered some encouragement to the views of the government of Vienna. The continued partiality of France for the interests of Prussia had been one of the bitterest disappointments of Austria since the Peace of Luneville. In order to influence the Emperor against the court of Berlin, an attempt had been made to induce Laforest to color his reports. Soon after the ambassador's arrival at the Prussian capital, an emissary of the Austrian foreign office approached him with the gift of a magnificent diamond and a large sum of money, being an ostensible appreciation of his "good will" toward Austria during his stay at Regensburg. Several interviews took place, and a long memorandum was read to Laforest, in which were expressed the views of the cabinet of Vienna and the fear that Talleyrand was hostile to its interests.

In this conversation [reported the Austrian agent], as well as in a previous one, I touched upon the service which he might render to my court, in calling attention in his reports to the true state of affairs here, and the little cause one would henceforth have in Paris to favor the rapacity of Prussia against the disinterested and accommodating views of the Imperial court.

It does not seem that these overtures greatly influenced Laforest, who gratefully pocketed the bribe, while denying any hostility on the part of Talleyrand toward Austria and overflowing with platitudes concerning his own sentiments.³ The

³The unsigned and undated report of this agent is preserved in the Vienna Staats-Archiv with the documents of 1805 (S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82), but its con-

incident, however, is illustrative of the feeling at Vienna that Prussia even more than France constituted the great enemy, as well as the ease with which the government of Paris could play off the German powers against one another.

The complacency which Napoleon had promised for any "conquest in peace" that Austria might make in Germany evaporated with his increasing resentment at the hesitation of the Hofburg in recognizing his imperial dignity. Since early in the year the cabinet of Vienna had sought to extend the Austrian holdings in Swabia, and soon it was making separate arrangements with impoverished princelings by which they resigned their sovereignty in exchange for Bohemian estates or sums of money. The envoys of France in South Germany repeatedly called the attention of their government to this process,⁴ but Napoleon had paid little attention until he found it of interest to put pressure upon the Hofburg to secure its recognition of his title. On August 15 Talleyrand presented a note to Philip Cobenzl, which spoke of the continued rumors of Austrian advances in Swabia and especially along the Swiss border by the purchase of numerous territories. Such a procedure, being troublesome to the stability of Germany, was contrary to the spirit of both the Treaty of Luneville and the Imperial Recess, and was in addition undesirable because it brought Austria into closer contact with France.⁵ At Vienna the Vice-Chancellor declared that the Emperor was well within his rights, exchanges of territories having been expressly authorized by the Recess, but he added the promise that no further ones were to be undertaken.⁶ Thus Austria again found herself restrained by the jealous watchfulness of France.

tents prove it to date from late 1803 or early 1804. A notation records that Ranke and Beer were not permitted its use, but Fournier (*Gentz und Cobenzl*, p. 71) speaks of Laforest's receiving 50,000 gulden from Stadion and thus may have had access to it, though he in no way mentions the document or indicates other knowledge of its character.

⁴ Thus Massias to Talleyrand, 27 pluviôse an XII (Feb. 16, 1804). A.E., BADE, 6, no. 18.

⁵ A.E., AUTRICHE, 375, no. 128.

⁶ Champagny to Talleyrand, 14 fructidor an XII (Sept. 1, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 375, no. 128.

Cobenzl's fears of a renewed advance of the French in Italy were only too well-grounded. In the fall of 1804 Napoleon informed the Italian Republic that his dual position as the head of a monarchy and a republic was hardly consistent, and that he would be unable to retain the presidency of the latter. It was made evident that a monarchy under one of the members of his house would be agreeable to him. There were indeed weighty reasons for the consolidation of his power in Italy. The English and Russians were known to contemplate an attack upon the French troops in Naples,⁷ and the suspicion that Austria might soon declare against him demanded the speedy concentration of Italian affairs. The cabinet of Vienna, on the other hand, came to fear that war would be thrust upon it before Austria had the means to defend herself. Moreover, Stadion, the new ambassador at St. Petersburg, reported that further hesitation might cause the loss of Russian coöperation. Cobenzl began to fear that if he resisted much longer his own position would be undermined. A number of the most influential diplomatists, headed by Stadion, Metternich, and Starhemberg, were seeking his overthrow, while Gentz worked upon the Emperor through Archduke John. His most dangerous opponents were the English and Russian ambassadors, Paget and Razumovsky, who were agreed that the removal of the Vice-Chancellor was an absolute necessity before Austria could be made to join the coalition. The former even advised his government to concert with the cabinet of St. Petersburg that he and Razumovsky be instructed to present a common demand for the dismissal of Cobenzl under the threat that they would have no further communication with him.⁸ The Emperor's confessor was initiated into their views, and on more than one occasion he carried their complaints to his imperial charge.

⁷ Instructions were sent to the French commanders in Italy, directing the moves to be made in case of an Anglo-Russian invasion. To Berthier, Sept. 3, 1804. *Corr.*, IX, no. 7981.

⁸ Paget to Hawkesbury, April 9, 1804. *Paget Papers*, II, 122. Cobenzl, as his correspondence with d'Antraigues shows, was perfectly aware of the machinations of the English and Russian envoys. Fournier, *Gentz und Cobenzl*, pp. 224-233.

The fear of his overthrow by the war party may have had much to do with Cobenzl's final decision to enter into a definitive arrangement with Russia. The task of persuading the Emperor was not an easy one, for Francis was pacifically inclined and had much confidence in the stabilizing influence of the restored monarchy in France. Only shortly before he had said to the British ambassador that the establishment of the Empire was an event out of which much good might arise, ". . . as one which would have the tendency of ensuring the tranquility of Europe, of securing the present sovereigns on their thrones, and of consolidating the rights of their legitimate successors." He also spoke with "some degree of asperity" about Russia's action in the Enghien case, describing it as a threat which she had neither the intention nor the ability to act upon.⁹ So Cobenzl had no easy task in gaining his master to his views, especially as Archduke Charles brought to bear the remnant of his influence to dissuade his imperial brother. Only with the greatest difficulty did the Vice-Chancellor finally succeed in prevailing upon Francis to accept a defensive alliance, and on October 3 a courier with the rough draft of a convention left Vienna for the Russian capital. On November 6 a secret convention was actually signed by the representatives of the two governments, pledging them to a common war against Napoleon if he should be guilty of any of the following acts: first, if he attacked Turkey; second, if he occupied additional North German states; third, if he further violated the neutrality of the Kingdom of Naples. Russia was to furnish 115,000 and Austria 235,000 men, Alexander agreeing to secure subsidies for the Austrian troops from England. In the event of victory in such a war the Austrian frontier in Italy was to be extended to the Ada, Piedmont returned to the King of Sardinia, the former Dukes of Modena and Tuscany restored to their possessions, and the German lands of the latter prince (Salzburg, Passau, and Berchtesgaden) given to Austria. If Prussia should attack one of the allies the other would come to his assistance, while

⁹ Paget to Harrowby, July 23, 1804. *Paget Papers*, II, 136.

a separate peace was not to be concluded by either of the contracting parties.¹⁰ The negotiation had been carried on with so much secrecy that in the Russian embassy at Vienna only Razumovsky handled the correspondence concerning it.¹¹ Yet like that of Novosiltzov at London it did not remain entirely unknown to Napoleon.

Austria's agreement to the Convention of November did not signify her readiness to confront Napoleon on the battlefield. Emperor Francis had accepted it because he had been told that it was the only way to preserve peace. The arguments which Cobenzl had used to persuade his master are outlined in a memorandum which he presented to the Emperor on October 13. An extract from this paper gives us an excellent résumé of the policy of Austria:

Next to preparations for the defense of the state, foreign alliances which secure us strong support are the best guarantees of peace, especially if our position shows Bonaparte that these alliances are only intended to prevent him from injuring us, but not to harm him. . . . I know only two possibilities of war: 1. The necessity to defend ourselves if Bonaparte attacks us, and 2. when he, without attacking us, makes important conquests, which add to his already limitless power. To allow him to proceed in the latter case would not mean to avoid war, but rather to postpone it in a manner which would leave us without the means to save ourselves.¹²

Although the avowed purpose of Austria's accession to the convention was thus to secure peace, it still laid the basis for further steps in the direction of war. The seventh article provided for future understandings in case of developments which might require the employment of forces for other reasons than those expressly stated in the treaty.¹³ Any important step for-

¹⁰ Text in Neumann, *Recueil des traités . . . conclus par l'Autriche*, II, no. 141.

¹¹ Paget to Harrowby, Aug., 1804. *Paget Papers*, II, 144.

¹² Fournier, *Gentz und Cobenzl*, p. 148.

¹³ The article in question reads: "Vu l'incertitude où les deux hautes puissances contractantes se trouvent encore actuellement sur les desseins futurs du gouvernement français, elles se réservent en outre de ce qui stipule ci-dessus, de convenir suivant l'urgence des circonstances, de différents cas qui seraient de nature à exiger aussi l'emploi de leurs forces mutuelles." Neumann, *Recueil des traités*, II, 109.

ward by the Emperor of the French might be considered as such a development by one of the contracting powers, apparently justifying an appeal to the other to take up arms. From the Austrian point of view everything depended upon the steps which Napoleon might take in Italy. The statesmen of Vienna had agreed to a defensive alliance with Russia on the mere rumor of a union between France and Italy. The fate of the Italian Republic had indeed become the touchstone of the situation.

Austria's fear that a war over and in Italy might soon be forced upon her induced her to inaugurate military preparations in that quarter. The circumstances which accompanied the meeting of Napoleon and the German princes, as well as the allusions to Charlemagne in the coronation, also aroused the apprehension that the French were meditating an attack upon the remnants of the imperial system in Germany.¹⁴ The fact that cholera had broken out in certain sections along the Adriatic was seized upon as an excuse for drawing a "sanitary cordon" from Illyria to Tyrol. The fact that even the Viennese newspapers reported the end of the epidemic was not taken into consideration. The institution of the cordon was officially announced to the French government to avert suspicion. Champagny had now been recalled to be made minister of the interior, and the remaining chargé d'affaires, Dodun, was not disturbed by the measure.¹⁵ But Napoleon, through his excellent spy system, was exactly informed as to the true status of the matter, and his suspicion that Austria was preparing for war took even firmer root. Philip Cobenzl received a rude New Year's greeting from the Emperor, who said to him: "I answer threat with threat; if the Emperor Francis arms, so will I." ¹⁶

If Napoleon had really desired a war upon the Continent, he might have used the Austrian military movements as a conven-

¹⁴ Otto to Talleyrand, 7 nivôse an XIII (Dec. 28, 1804). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 180, no. 159.

¹⁵ Dodun to Talleyrand, 3 frimaire an XIII (Nov. 24, 1804); "Extrait" of a dispatch to Philip Cobenzl, Dec. 6, 1804. A.E., AUTRICHE, 376, nos. 62, 69.

¹⁶ Fournier, *Gentz und Cobenzl*, p. 150. Also related in a milder form by Talleyrand to Dodun, 12 nivôse an XIII (Jan. 2, 1805). A.E., AUTRICHE, 376, no. 102.

ient pretext. That he desired peace at this time is demonstrated by his treatment of the Italian situation. On the same day that he so roughly warned Cobenzl of the consequences of Austria's armaments, he wrote to Francis that he had decided to proclaim his brother Joseph King of Italy. He characterized this move as a great personal sacrifice on his part in order to reassure the sovereigns of Europe and prove himself agreeable to the Austrian Emperor. Simultaneously he remarked that it would be wise for the Austrians to cease their movements in Tyrol and Carniola, since they would force him to assemble troops both on the Rhine and in Italy.¹⁷ Instructions were sent to La Rochefoucauld, who had been selected as the new ambassador at Vienna, to hurry to the Austrian capital, as a "*rassemblement extraordinaire*" of troops on the Italian frontier seemed on the point of provoking a crisis. There were reports of the arrival of General Mack and the concentration of 42,000 men. "The presence of an ambassador at Vienna becomes so much the more necessary, as perhaps but a few explanations will be required to put an end to the solitudes, which, if prolonged, might prejudice the good harmony of the two powers." La Rochefoucauld should keep in mind that his mission was absolutely one of peace and friendship, but he was to bend every effort to fathom the intentions of the Hofburg as well as the extent of its relations with England.¹⁸

Napoleon was probably sincere when he told the Austrian sovereign that it would not be an agreeable necessity for him to withdraw his troops from the Channel in order to assemble them on the eastern frontiers. The result of such a move would probably be that the Hofburg would back down completely. The enormous expense and loss of time incurred would thus be wasted. It might in fact necessitate the invasion of Austria in order to secure compensation for the injury done to the over-

¹⁷ Jan. 1, 1805. *Corr.*, X, no. 8350. Orders for extensive preparations in Italy were actually sent to Berthier and General Pino. *Ibid.*, X, nos. 8243, 8282, 8283, 8287, 8288.

¹⁸ Talleyrand to La Rochefoucauld, 12 nivôse an XIII (Jan. 2, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 376, no. 103.

strained finances of France. Napoleon's letter had the desired effect of showing the Austrian statesmen that they were proceeding too rapidly. "Above everything else," wrote Colloredo to Philip Cobenzl, "it is necessary for us to gain time and to engage ourselves in no way while avoiding a precipitate break for the moment." Austria was sure of the support of 115,000 Russians, and there were also discussions between the two imperial courts and that of Berlin, but as yet the Emperor was disposed to peace. Everything depended upon what Napoleon would do next. Was he determined to distract attention from the apparent failure of the descent project by a forward policy upon the Continent, commencing with the transformation of the client republics into vassal monarchies? Time alone could tell; meanwhile it would be well to negotiate upon the question of the kingship of Joseph Bonaparte in Italy and avoid immediate recognition.¹⁹

On January 23 Francis replied to the letter of his imperial brother of France. He expressed his great pain at Napoleon's suspicions regarding the sanitary cordon, which contained only those troops which were regularly stationed in the neighboring provinces. In similar circumstances France had herself taken such measures on the Spanish frontier. In the most earnest terms Francis declared his determination to preserve peace. He trusted that the new kingdom of Italy would be entirely independent "as Napoleon had promised," but hinted that further explanations were in order.²⁰ A line was thus thrown out on which the Austrians hoped to hold themselves until they had armed and come to an understanding with their prospective allies. Among themselves they characterized it as a "*vorläufige Antwort*," whose main object was to permit the postponement of any definite reply while not provoking Napoleon to cast himself upon them. Philip Cobenzl was particularly instructed not to allow the impression to become general that Austria had ratified what France was about to do in Italy. It was especially

¹⁹ Colloredo to P. Cobenzl, Jan. 23, 1805. S.-A., FRANKREICH, 281 (I-III), fol. 3-5, 41-46.

²⁰ A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 27, fol. 37-39.

feared that the Pope might consent to crown the new king or make some other public show of approval if he felt that Austria had no objections.²¹

Though Napoleon realized that the desired recognition had not been granted, he was now satisfied that no hostile move was intended for the time being.²² The orders for military preparations in Italy were therefore countermanded or modified.²³ Talleyrand delivered a note to Philip Cobenzl, informing him of the Emperor's satisfaction with the letter of his sovereign. Because of information previously received, France had been forced to order certain troops to the peninsula and provide for the formation of camps at Milan and Verona, but everything was now to be countermanded.²⁴ La Rochefoucauld's attention was called to an article in the *Moniteur*, ". . . which can leave no further cause for any of the solitudes which malevolence has sought to nourish between France and Austria." The ambassador was to keep his language strictly in accord with these sentiments.²⁵

Probably the knowledge of the desperate situation in the Hapsburg dominions did more to reassure Napoleon than the Emperor's protestations of friendship. Champagny had always contended that Austria could not possibly sustain the economic weight of a new continental war, even if well supported by English subsidies. La Rochefoucauld now struck up a similar tune with additional variations. "Your excellency," he wrote to Talleyrand on one occasion, "cannot have an idea of the condition of this country. Everything is neglected, and the finances are in a position which alone ought to reassure us on the projects which some people wish to ascribe to this court."²⁶ Like his

²¹ Colloredo to P. Cobenzl, Jan. 23, 1805. S.-A., FRANKREICH, 281 (I-III), fol. 53-54. Cobenzl Jan. 23, 1805. S.-A. FRANKREICH 281

²² "J'ai donc jugé à propos de ne rien faire, les circonstances ayant changé par une lettre que je viens à recevoir de l'Empereur de l'Allemagne, qui m'a absolument tranquilisé." To Melzi, Feb. 1, 1805. *Corr.*, X, no. 8308.

²³ "Mon intention est de contremander une partie de ces mouvements." To Berthier, Feb. 1, 1805. *Ibid.*, no. 8306, 8307.

²⁴ Feb. 2, 1805. A.E., AUTRICHE, 376, no. 161.

²⁵ 13 pluviôse an XIII (Feb. 3, 1805). *Ibid.*, 376, no. 164.

²⁶ 9 prairial an XIII (May 29, 1805). *Ibid.*, 377, no. 11.

predecessor, La Rochefoucauld was convinced that Cobenzl still represented the policy of peace. The same views had long been entertained at Paris. When in May of the previous year there had been rumors of the formation of a party at Vienna which sought to procure the overthrow of the Vice-Chancellor, Talleyrand had informed Champagny that the Emperor would see this with the greatest regret, as this minister seemed to hold, more than any other, to a pacific course. The French ambassador had been instructed to adopt all prudent and tactful means to strengthen Cobenzl's position, while articles were inserted in the Paris journals "unveiling the intrigues aiming at the recall of Thugut."²⁷ It is therefore not surprising that La Rochefoucauld was believed when he declared: "M. de Cobenzl is absolutely for peace and the reason therefore is very simple, because all Vienna knows, and he does not doubt himself, that the moment of the commencement of hostilities will be that of the recall of Thugut and, in consequence, of his dismissal."²⁸

The condition of the Austrian army early in 1805 was such as doubly to confirm the French in their belief that the cabinet of Vienna could not risk a combat. The lack of men and materials made it appear almost impossible to fill the gaps; half the soldiers were on leave, and not a single battery in the artillery had its full complement of horses. In the November convention Austria had promised to have 235,000 men ready within three months after war should be decided upon, while Archduke Charles (who had not been consulted on the matter) estimated that it would be impossible to do so in less than six. Since becoming minister of war in 1801 Charles had undertaken the difficult task of reforming the military administration, especially the Imperial War Council (*Hofkriegsrath*), which had suffered much since its excellent reorganization under Field Marshal Lacy during the reign of Joseph II. Charles has been blamed for undertaking changes when he could hardly count

²⁷ Talleyrand to Champagny, 13 floréal an XII (May 3, 1805). A.E., AUTRICHE, 375, no. 7.

²⁸ To Talleyrand, 2 prairial an XIII (May 22, 1805). A.E., AUTRICHE, 377, no. 2.

on many years of peace to ensure their success; yet the old army organization was ready to fall to pieces, and the period after Luneville was one in which people were much more than usually receptive to suggestions of reform. To give his measures time to take effect, Charles now urged the maintenance of peace with all the arguments at his command. But the war party had been given its head since the convention of November 6, and it now set itself the task of bringing about his overthrow. Francis was made to desire an independent war council directly responsible to himself. He had long been jealous of his brilliant brother and was not sorry to be convinced that it was necessary to limit his activities. The old order was reintroduced, and General Mack, a famed organizer, was appointed quartermaster-general. This man declared himself fully capable of assembling and organizing the army within the required time. In spite of the disgust of Archduke Charles, who was inclined for a moment to ask for his own dismissal, Mack was given a free hand in this field, and by the middle of May the preparations were in full swing throughout the Austrian dominions.²⁹

If Cobenzl believed that his master's letter would stimulate Napoleon to further explanations, he soon discovered that he was badly mistaken. The Emperor and Talleyrand gave the situation a humorous turn by pretending that the communication was entirely satisfactory and telling everyone that the changes in Italy were unreservedly endorsed at Vienna. But the Italian question was further complicated by Joseph's refusal to accept the proffered throne. There has been a great deal of controversy as to whether Napoleon's offer to his brother was ever sincere, whether it was not a blind to make his own act of taking the crown appeal less premeditated. But the strongest proof of the fact that he had not expected to appropriate the Italian crown to himself lies in the very nature of the communications to Austria on the question of Joseph's candidacy. The letter to

²⁹ An excellent discussion of the reforms of Archduke Charles is that of Eduard Wertheimer, "Erzherzog Karl als Präsident des Hofkriegsrathes, 1801-1805," *Archiv für österreichische Geschichte*, LXVI (1885), 277-314.

Francis had already pointed out with force that he was making a considerable sacrifice of power in renouncing the personal union between France and Italy. La Rochefoucauld was instructed to lay continual emphasis upon this feature in his relations with the Austrian government, that the control of the French over northern Italy would now be much decreased. When one reads the reports of the more zealous than clever ambassador, one notes how he outdid himself in demonstrating to Cobenzl how much better the new arrangement would be for Austria than the quasi-personal union which had existed since 1802.³⁰ One may well ask, would Napoleon have intentionally caused himself all the embarrassment of having later to refute the very arguments upon which he now placed so much emphasis?

His brother Louis having similarly refused to accept the crown of Italy, Napoleon finally decided to take it for himself. On March 17 he replied in the affirmative to the request of a deputation sent to offer it to him. Under the terms of the statute by which he was created King of Italy, he was to give the throne to a member of his family as soon as Malta and the Ionian Islands were evacuated by the English and Russian troops then in occupation. The succession was to be in his male heirs, whether natural or adopted, while after him the crowns of France and Italy were never to be united on the same head.³¹

What were Napoleon's real intentions concerning the ultimate future of the Kingdom of Italy? Bourrienne reports that the Emperor said to him, as he was about to leave to be crowned at Milan, that the union with France was only temporary, that it was necessary to accustom the Italians to living under common laws, and that he would give his new kingdom its independence as soon as it had become a thoroughly amalgamated state. To accomplish this unification, he added, would take at least twenty years.³² However laudable the sentiments here expressed

³⁰ Talleyrand to La Rochefoucauld, 12 nivôse; La Rochefoucauld to Talleyrand 16 pluviôse an XIII (Jan. 2 and 26, 1805). A.E., AUTRICHE, 375, nos. 104, 150.

³¹ Statut Constitutionel of March 17, 1805. *Corr.*, X, no. 8448.

³² Bourrienne, *Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte*, II, 381-382.

may be, they show very definitely that everything depended upon Napoleon's personal decision and that the article in the constitutional statute which made the length of his reign depend on the sojourn of the English in Malta and the Russians in the Ionian Islands was only a play of words, largely calculated, as we shall see, to perplex the Austrians.

That this was the intent was clearly demonstrated by the letter in which Napoleon announced his new dignity to Emperor Francis. This epistle is a very model of argumentative and explanatory originality. The Republic of Italy, owing to apprehension over the presence of hostile troops in Malta and Corfu, feels that the immediate separation from France would be undesirable. Since Francis must have it at heart to secure this separation at the earliest possible date, it would be wise for him to use his entire influence to bring about the evacuation of the islands in question. The French emperor's sincerest wish is to bring about a lasting peace.³³ La Rochefoucauld was provided with a similar set of platitudes. The Emperor had only consented to take the crown of Lombardy because Prince Joseph had refused to give up his rights to that of France. His act was thus one of "*homage to the principle of the separation of the two crowns.*" Napoleon had not been able to bring himself to give the crown to anyone who might some day rule in France and so was taking the most proper path to ensure separation in the future. The ambassador was to be careful to put nothing in writing.³⁴

The cabinet of Vienna was placed in a peculiarly painful position. The time had evidently come for a decision for or against war. If it desired peace, the only course remaining open, if the French were to be brought out of Italy, was to follow Napoleon's suggestion regarding the use of its influence in bringing about a general pacification in which Malta and the Ionian Islands were evacuated. Such a policy, however, was accompa-

³³ March 17, 1803. *Corr.*, X, no. 8445.

³⁴ Talleyrand to La Rochefoucauld, 28 ventôse an XIII (March 20, 1805). A.E., AUTRICHE, 376, no. 221.

nied by so much risk and danger that it was unacceptable. It might estrange Austria from her only possible allies in case of a future war with France, while it was exceedingly doubtful, to say the least, whether Napoleon would keep his promise and not retain his new kingdom on some pretext or other. The title "King of Italy" even seemed to point toward the eventual inclusion of the whole peninsula in his dominions, in spite of the fact that Talleyrand told Philip Cobenzl that it was much more limiting than "King of the Lombards." It was believed in Vienna that the newly acquired Venetian territories were also threatened and that the next move of the French ruler would be to incorporate the Papal States. The inclusion of the lion of Venice in the coat of arms of the Italian kingdom seemed to confirm such suspicions. Where indeed, wondered Vice-Chancellor Cobenzl, would this irresistible progress come to an end? In despair he wrote to Colloredo:

The prediction that Napoleon wishes to make himself King of the Romans, etc., etc., unhappily seems to have only too much of the appearance of truth. It is doubtless a difficult necessity to put obstacles in the path of his projects, but if we do not do so we will cease to exist. The alternative before us is a cruel one.³⁵

The minister tried to persuade his master to hint in his reply that Austria had reached an understanding with Russia and would take up arms if France did not limit her expansive movements. In this he failed, for Francis was too afraid of Napoleon to risk emphatic language. His letter, if anything, was less energetic than the previous one, expressing his hope that England and France would soon conclude peace, his confidence that Napoleon would keep his promises, and his firm intention of remaining neutral. He voiced only mild disapproval that the separation of the French and Italian crowns should depend on the length of the war with England and particular arrangements with other powers.³⁶ The French monarch must have read between the lines the timidity, the weakness, and the irresolution

³⁵ April 7, 1805. S.-A., GROSSE KORRESPONDENZ, 467, fol. 51-53.

³⁶ April 16, 1805. A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 27, fol. 41-42.

of Austria's policy. He immediately made the same use of the communication that had been derived from the previous one, Talleyrand being ordered to inform Berlin, Naples, and Madrid that Austria had recognized the Kingdom of Italy.³⁷

Meanwhile the negotiations between Austria and Russia were finally coming to a head. On April 14 Stadion dispatched the draft of the Anglo-Russian treaty of alliance to Vienna, where as yet there had been little suspicion of such a pact. Austria was practically faced by a *fait accompli*. Her ally had already chosen to consider the Napoleonic aggressions as sufficient to justify war and had bound himself to declare it unless France submitted to unacceptable conditions. Since the Austrian statesmen had long felt that war with France at a not distant date was inevitable, it was imperative to commence it when financial and military assistance could be secured from abroad. Russia had obtained England's guarantee for the desired subsidies, but only on condition that Austria went to war before the end of 1805. The Tsar also informed his ally that he would be unable to keep his troops on the border much longer, and even hinted that Austria might be left to fight her battles alone if she did not come to a definite agreement in the near future. These arguments had their effect. Nothing could have been worse, in the view of Francis and his ministers, than that Napoleon make his peace with Alexander by giving him a free hand in Poland and Turkey in return for complete liberty in Germany and Italy. If a Franco-Russian agreement came to pass, the Danube monarchy would be hemmed in from all sides and pass to the second rank of European states. Open war with France on the side of England and Russia offered the possibility of recovering what she had lost and the preservation of what she feared she was about to lose.

The negotiations came to a climax with the appearance in Vienna of Alexander's aide-de-camp, Wintzingerode. This officer had been in Berlin during the first months of the year, his mission being to persuade Prussia to coöperate with the coali-

³⁷ May 3, 1805. *Corr.*, X, no. 8679.

tion. He now began by assuring Cobenzl that it would not be difficult to coerce Prussia into joining the alliance. When the Austrian remarked that such a forced participation would be of little effect, Wintzingerode admitted the point, but demonstrated how a large portion of the French forces would have to guard against a Prussian attack. Cobenzl's final objection that Prussia might join France if subjected to intimidation was answered by the argument that only England could furnish the money which was necessary to enable the Prussian troops to take the field. The minister was at last convinced, but before he could tender his country's adherence to the coalition there was still one obstacle to be overcome — the timidity and irresolution of Francis. Although the hesitating monarch permitted the military and diplomatic preparations to proceed, he would not give his formal consent until two months later.

In the meantime Napoleon had been busy strengthening his position in Italy. The day after his acceptance of the Italian crown he conferred the principality of Piombino on his sister Elisa. This little territory had been secured from Naples in the Treaty of Florence, but in that of Aranjuez it was spoken of as the probable compensation of the King of Etruria for Elba. Late in 1802 Talleyrand had advised that a territory so close to Elba ought to belong to the Republic also.⁸⁸ It was now made the first of the long series of imperial fiefs. This comparatively insignificant change portends a great step forward in the Napoleonic political system — it provides us with the first hint of the approaching development of a dynastic policy. No longer can we regard him as merely the crowned head of a great republic, whose personal interests were largely limited to maintaining himself as the leader of his own state. Of greater immediate importance was the annexation of the Ligurian Republic (Genoa) to the French Empire on June 4.⁸⁹ This act was an unquestionable violation of the Treaty of Luneville and the De-

⁸⁸ Nov. 5, 1802. Bertrand, *Lettres inédites de Talleyrand à Napoléon*, no. 25.

⁸⁹ Réponse de l'Empereur au Doge et à la Députation du Senat et du peuple de Gênes, *Corr.*, X, no. 8836.

cember Convention of 1802, both of which had guaranteed the independence of that state. The news of the annexation caused the recall of Novosiltzov, who had proceeded as far as Berlin in his mission of carrying the allied ultimatum to Paris. In Vienna the last hopes for the preservation of peace now vanished; it was feared that the cession of the Venetian provinces would soon be demanded. General Colli reported a remark of Eugene Beauharnais' uncle to the effect that the terra firma of Venice up to the Piave was of small value to Austria and that it would be wise for her to exchange it for Bosnia and Serbia. Cobenzl took this as added proof that Napoleon had always entertained designs upon Venice.⁴⁰ Emperor Francis was at last brought to a decision, and his ministers were authorized to make Austria a member of the coalition. On July 16 a military conference in Vienna agreed on a plan of operations, and twelve days later Czartoryski, Stadion, and Lord Gower exchanged solemn declarations by which Austria at last formally became a party to the treaty of April 11.⁴¹

Since the middle of April it had been the task of Cobenzl to convince the French that Austria had no thought of war, hoping to keep the French army on the coast and the preparations in Italy retarded as long as possible. In this he succeeded in so far as the addlepatated La Rochefoucauld was concerned.⁴² Through June, July, and August the ambassador reported his unalterable conviction that Austria could not and would not take up arms. Thus on June 19:

It is certain that Austria does not want war and that the Emperor realizes how imprudent it would be to risk its chances. The finances are in such a state that everything which might augment expenses

⁴⁰ "Cela prouverait que Bonaparte a toujours eu quelques vues sur la Vénétien, et que nous devons être sur nos gardes à cet égard." To Colloredo, June 14, 1805. S.-A., GROSSE KORRESPONDENZ, 467, fol. 184.

⁴¹ Both the plan of operations and the declarations are given by Neumann, *Recueil des traités*, II, 121-129, 149-156.

⁴² On hearing of La Rochefoucauld's transfer from Dresden to Vienna, Metternich, who knew him well, wrote of him to Colloredo: "Il est nullement homme d'affaires, ne possède aucune genre de connoissance et d'instruction, et supplés à toutes ces laucunes par de l'esprit naturel et par une grande activité, qui mal-

must be avoided, and His Majesty manifests on every occasion his repugnance for a war which could not be other than disastrous for him.⁴³

Even La Rochefoucauld had to admit that fear alone restrained the Austrian government. He was fairly well informed on the Austrian military preparations and frankly characterized the recall of the men on leave as a measure which put the army on a war footing, but he was sure that the Hofburg's only motive was its ". . . *amour propre de paroître une puissance neutre redouté et par conséquent à ménager.*"⁴⁴ Napoleon, however, was not deceived either by the platitudes of Cobenzl or the assurances of his own ambassador. From Trieste and Fiume, from Venice and from Salzburg his agents were reporting on the military preparations of Austria.⁴⁵ He was not so well posted in the diplomatic as in the military field, for the negotiations of the allies had been carried on with almost unprecedented secrecy. The panic of the Austrians at the idea of a premature attack by Napoleon had made them insist that everything must be done at St. Petersburg. Paget knew so little about what was going on that he told Wintzingerode on July 20 that, in his opinion, nothing was to be done with Austria by negotiation, that the only way to secure the coöperation of the court of Vienna would be to march 200,000 Russians into the Austrian dominions.⁴⁶ To salve the ambassador's offended pride, Lord Mulgrave, then Secretary of Foreign Affairs, later excused himself as follows:

The anxious desire of Austria to prevent suspicion on the part of the French government previous to the full preparations of her means of defence, rendered it desirable that there should not be an appear-

heureusement s'attache souvent à des petites choses. . . . Il masque un grand degré d'embarras par un air d'arrogance, qu'il appelle à son secours dans toutes les grandes occasions. Bouillant dans le premier moment il recule dans le second. . . ." Jan. 20, 1805. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Jan.-April), fol. 35-36.

⁴³ A.E., AUTRICHE, 377, no. 43.

⁴⁴ 28 ventôse an XIII (March 20, 1805). *Ibid.*, 376, no. 223.

⁴⁵ From each of these and from several other points Napoleon received reports every few days, regarding the number and character of troops assembled, purchases of cattle and horses, and the preparations of fortifications. *Ibid.*, 377, nos. 15, 21, 29, 34, 51, 54, 69, 88, 89, 97.

⁴⁶ Paget to Mulgrave, July 20, 1805. *Paget Papers*, II, 188.

ance of frequent and confidential conferences between the British minister and the Austrian cabinet, and the consequently frequent dispatch of couriers between Vienna and London. There cannot be a stronger proof of the efficacy of the measure of negotiating at St. Petersburg for the purpose of secrecy, than the little suspicion entertained by the French ambassador at Vienna, and the circumstances of your having yourself (with all the exertion of your constant vigilant attention to the conduct of the Austrian government) doubted the course which might ultimately be adopted by them.⁴⁷

As Gentz and a large number of other individuals usually in the confidence of the Hofburg were similarly deceived, it is easier to forgive La Rochefoucauld for his error. Napoleon himself judged more by the facts of the situation than by the absence of positive proof that Austria had decided against him. He had long been ready to strike at Austria through Germany if war should become inevitable. It was only there that the army of Boulogne could be launched with a maximum of rapidity; as the Emperor remarked to Metternich in 1810, Boulogne was very near to Vienna. As early as September 23, 1804, he had given orders for the extension of the fortifications and the collection of war materials at Mainz. These measures were enlarged upon in October and November, Napoleon expressing his conviction that Mainz and Strasbourg would be of the greatest importance in case of a war with Austria. In them he saw the key to the heart of Germany.⁴⁸ On October 20 Berthier was instructed to order the preparation of a map of Swabia, in which the condition of the roads (for the passage of artillery) was to be accurately marked down: "If all the passes of the Black Forest are exactly marked, this map will be one of the most valuable and necessary which we have."⁴⁹ Thus Napoleon had already selected his battlefield as well as the route which his

⁴⁷ Mulgrave to Paget, Sept. 10, 1805. *Ibid.*, II, 212. The specific exclusion of Paget was also in some measure owing to the lack of confidence reposed in him by Cobenzl. In a letter to d'Antraigues of October, 1804, the Vice-Chancellor refers to him as follows: "Quoique dans le fond il ait de bons sentiments, son exaltation et sa véhémence sont telles qu'on ne peut lui parler qu'avec grande précaution." Fournier, *Gentz und Cobenzl*, p. 231.

⁴⁸ To Berthier, Oct. 2 and Nov. 11, 1804. *Corr.*, IX, no. 8075; X, no. 8177.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, X, no. 8131.

army was to traverse almost a year before the War of the Third Coalition actually began.

When the relations with Austria became strained after his assumption of the Italian crown, Napoleon took further steps to strengthen his position if war were the result. French and Italian troops were assembled at Alexandria and Verona, the avowed purpose being to perform maneuvers on the battlefield of Marengo. Measures were taken to insure intelligence as to every move of the Austrian and Russian troops.⁵⁰ The Emperor had already come to the conclusion that his task would be to prevent the junction of the allied armies.⁵¹

In the diplomatic field the task of ascertaining the intentions of the enemy was much more complicated; regiments could not be moved without leaving some trace, but any kind of negotiation might be going on between the Austrians and Russians. As his ambassador was unable to fathom the purpose of Wintzingerode's mission, the Emperor hit upon a plan which he hoped would oblige the Hofburg to reveal the true state of its sentiments. He described the scheme in a note to Talleyrand:

Nothing could be more proper to give me the exact measure of the dispositions of the court of Vienna than to open a negotiation, the object of which would be to exchange a certain number of grand cordons of the Legion of Honor for an equal number of cordons of Austrian orders.⁵²

But the Austrians were ready with an excuse which it was difficult not to accept. Of the Hapsburg orders only that of Maria Theresa was ever given to foreigners, and even this could only be granted in time of war to the subjects of an allied state. This contention could not be refuted, and La Rochefoucauld was ordered to drop the matter, ". . . which at least had served to manifest the constant design of the Emperor Napoleon to

⁵⁰ Orders to Berthier and to Pino. *Corr.*, X, nos. 8454, 8491, 8581, 8606.

⁵¹ "Il faudra bien que je ne donne pas le temps aux troupes autrichiennes de se réunir aux Russes et de marcher." To Talleyrand, April 16, 1805. *Ibid.*, X, no. 8590.

⁵² June 6. *Corr.*, X, no. 8845; Instructions of Talleyrand to La Rochefoucauld, 18 prairial an XII (June 7, 1805). *A.E., AUTRICHE*, 377, no. 19.

cultivate the relations of perfect amity which exist between the two states."⁵³ That Napoleon really had this second end in view is shown by a letter which he wrote to Talleyrand the day after he had revealed his original intention:

Nothing would be more proper to sound the sentiments of Austria, *and to reassure her if she is alarmed about mine. . . . This will flatter Austria; if she refuses, she will be somewhat indemnified for the unhappiness which the late developments have caused her; if she accepts, it will mean three or four months gained.*⁵⁴

One can easily comprehend the desire to reassure Austria, as it would naturally give her the impression that Napoleon suspected nothing and that there was no need for precipitation. But why should he wish to delay the outbreak of war for three or four months? Austria as yet had not the means to resist a vigorous attack, while the French army had been ready to move for over a year. Every advantage lay on the side of Napoleon if he chose to begin hostilities at once. Why deliberately give Austria time to prepare and allow the Russians, who were still in distant Poland, to come within striking distance of South Germany? If one reads the correspondence of these months the riddle is solved. When one considers all the means which were invented to draw the attention of England away from the Channel; when one discovers how with marvelous consideration for the smallest detail the movements of the French fleets were guided — then there can be little doubt in one's mind that it is hope for the final success of the long contemplated invasion of England that prevents Napoleon from attacking Austria without delay. The descent project of the year 1805 requires a treatment all its own; here it is of vital importance for Napoleon's policy in regard to the commencement of the war of the Third

⁵³ Dispatch of Talleyrand, 13 messidor an XIII (July 2, 1805). A.E., AUTRICHE, 377, no. 58.

⁵⁴ June 7, 1805. Italics by author. Not included in the *Correspondence*. Discovered in the Austrian archives, into which it found its way in some mysterious manner, by Fournier, who published it in his study: *Zur Textkritik der Korrespondenz Napoleons* (1903), pp. 93 ff. It is curious that the true significance of the document should have so completely escaped the great Austrian scholar.

Coalition upon the Continent. It alone saved Austria in the spring and early summer of that eventful year.

The desire to avoid or postpone the conflict with Austria had been evident throughout the spring. No protest was raised when Francis did not follow the example of France and order his troops to move back from the Italian border. La Rochefoucauld might incidentally touch upon the matter in his conversations with Cobenzl, but he was to be most circumspect in his language. When the ambassador took it upon himself to demand an explanation for further concentration of troops, he was sharply reprimanded. Nobody had any objection to his keeping his eyes open, but it was for the instruction of his government and to take its orders, not to give his actions too official a character: "The formation of a few camps in Italy cannot be the object of any real inquietude and you must above all else avoid showing any." ⁵⁵

Napoleon was thus anxious not to force Austria's hand at a time when it might interfere with his plans of an English invasion; nothing could be a stronger proof of this than that he, who was usually so sensitive to hostile preparations, should abstain from demanding explanations which he had every right to expect. If Austria had not been in a position where the maintenance of peace meant the loss of all support from Russia, it is indeed possible that an understanding between Paris and Vienna might still have been reached.⁵⁶ Napoleon dissolved the camps at Castiglione and Montechiara and suggested that the status quo *actuel* in military matters be preserved, particularly in Italy. Coincidentally he gave the most solemn assurances that his orbit would be strictly limited in the future. It was impossible for any enlightened man to doubt that his continental

⁵⁵ Talleyrand to La Rochefoucauld, 21 ventôse, 9 prairial, and 13 messidor an XIII (March 12, May 29, and July 2, 1805). A.E., AUTRICHE, 376, no. 211; 377, nos. 9, 58.

⁵⁶ In a letter to Colloredo of April 7 Cobenzl says that in the effort to preserve peace there are "deux lignes que nous ne pouvons absolument dépasser," being "... perdre les secours de la Russie et de l'Angleterre et négliger nos propres mesures de sûreté." S.-A., GROSSE KORRESPONDENZ, 467, fol. 51-53.

system was not completely developed. He had no wish to cross either the Rhine or the Adige, and any other projects ascribed to him were the pure inventions of malice.⁵⁷

On June 15 General Vincent came to Verona to present to the Emperor the compliments of Field Marshal Bellegarde, then commander of the Austrian troops in Italy. Europe, Napoleon told him, was in an "*état absolument forcé*." The armies maintained by the powers were far too big and should be cut in half. Everything was the fault of England, for there was no real problem in Europe outside of Russia's views upon Turkey, in the partition of which Austria ought to have a share. He knew that Russia was trying to entice Emperor Francis into a coalition, but she would be sure to desert him at the critical juncture. Only the return of Thugut could ever prevail upon him to make war upon Austria.⁵⁸

One wonders how sincere were these assurances and protestations. The fact that Genoa had just been annexed would hardly seem to indicate that Napoleon was really anxious for an understanding with Austria. Yet this almost precipitate activity in the consolidation of his control in Italy may have been motivated by the desire to assure his position there before turning his back upon the Continent, as well as by the wish to place the powers before a *fait accompli* in the negotiations which Novosiltzov's mission was expected to initiate. Whatever may have been the purpose of his overtures, they produced little effect upon the Hofburg. Regarding the Emperor's remarks to Vincent, Colloredo declared that he spoke as if Europe were still the same as it was at the time of the Peace of Luneville.⁵⁹ On July 3 Cobenzl read the cabinet's reply to La Rochefoucauld. The French troops, said he, were still in Italy, even though the camps might have been dissolved. There was talk of new reinforcements and

⁵⁷ Napoleon to Talleyrand, June 19. *Corr.*, X, no. 8905; Talleyrand to La Rochefoucauld, 1 messidor an XIII (June 20, 1804). A.E., AUTRICHE, 377, no. 46.

⁵⁸ "Notes" of General Baron Vincent. S.-A., FRANKREICH, 281 (IV-VII), fol. 53-57.

⁵⁹ Colloredo to P. Cobenzl, June 26, 1805. *Ibid.*, 281 (IV-VII), fol. 50-51, 59.

the levying of 60,000 Italian conscripts. Austria would be glad to be enlightened on the subject of the changes in Genoa, Lucca, Parma, and Piacenza.⁶⁰

In all sections of the Hapsburg dominions preparations for war continued at full speed, although Cobenzl never ceased his protestations that no hostile action was contemplated. Seeing that his conciliatory efforts had failed, Napoleon decided to adopt a firmer tone. The former policy of paying little attention to Austria's preparations and acting as if everything were in good order was now abandoned. In repeated dispatches La Rochefoucauld was ordered to bring up the various points about which France felt she had a right to complain. Much ado was raised about the restrictions upon French travelers. The Austrians, with much reason, believed that their dominions were being swamped with spies and agitators, and soon they were arresting suspiciously acting Frenchmen or refusing them the right of unrestricted travel. Among the latter was a certain Coeffier, who was being sent by the French government to investigate the possibility of arousing the Hungarians. Napoleon may have hoped to renew the ancient policy of France — that of distracting the attention of Austria by creating difficulties in her own dominions, while he was undertaking his descent upon England. But the individual chosen to prepare the ground was a vain and imprudent fellow, so impressed with his own importance that he made it a point to insinuate to others he was entrusted with a mission.⁶¹ It is no wonder that the Viennese police soon got on his trail and that he was refused permission to proceed to Hungary; Talleyrand made a great fuss about the matter, probably to protest his own innocence.

On July 24 a note was presented to Philip Cobenzl which

⁶⁰ Colloredo to P. Cobenzl, June 30; Project of reply to La Rochefoucauld. S.-A., FRANKREICH, 281 (IV-VII), fol. 80-82, 115-116.

⁶¹ La Rochefoucauld to Talleyrand, 28 messidor an XIII (July 17, 1805). A E., AUTRICHE, supplément 27, fol. 49. The reports of Coeffier are also preserved in this dossier. His principal recommendation was to distribute books upon Hungarian history, so that it would be brought home to the people what the ancestors of the great lords now serving Austria had done in the struggle against her.

already had something of the air of an ultimatum. After touching upon the various grievances brought forward previously, the positive statement was made that the Emperor preferred war to a state of hostile preparations, outrages, and menaces. Napoleon wished only for peace, but it would have to be such an one that he would not have to fear an attack by Austria in his rear. "The Emperor demands in a positive manner to know the intentions of the court of Vienna," Talleyrand wrote to La Rochefoucauld. "If the reply is not satisfactory or if the facts are not in accordance with its pacific declarations, it must not be astonished to see a new army marching into Italy."⁶²

Not satisfied with the vigor of these declarations, Napoleon ordered Talleyrand to draw up an even stronger note.⁶³ The minister outdid himself and produced an epistle of twenty pages in which the differences between France and Austria were thoroughly reviewed. The advance of Russia toward the west and south, as evidenced in her history of the previous fifty years, was declared to be the real danger threatening Austria. Napoleon, being the King of Italy for only a limited time, was not interested in extending the limits of that state, especially as it would not be to the advantage of France to extend its power too greatly. In the present state of the sentiments of the government of Great Britain there was little chance of arriving at peace except by a maritime war, to which the Emperor was anxious to devote his entire energy. He hoped that Austria would not turn him from this path and that she would tranquilize him by returning her forces to a peace footing. Her answer was sure to be determinative.⁶⁴

The note was written in a moderate and even an exalted tone.

⁶² Talleyrand to P. Cobenzl; the same to La Rochefoucauld, 3 thermidor an XIII (July 22, 1805). A.E., AUTRICHE, 377, nos. 95, 102.

⁶³ Even some of the actual text was prescribed to Talleyrand. He is particularly ordered to write: "L'Empereur se croira en paix avec l'Autriche; que si, au contraire, les troupes continuant à filer, les magazines à se former, l'Empereur considéra l'Autriche comme voulant la guerre, et, dans l'impossibilité de soutenir sa guerre maritime, il marchera pour pacifier entièrement l'Autriche." *Corr.*, X, no. 9038.

⁶⁴ 17 thermidor an XIII (Aug. 5, 1805). A.E., AUTRICHE, 377, no. 131.

Was it desired to hold Austria back a little longer until the fate of the expedition against England was decided? It is more probable that it was principally motivated by the intention to publish it after war had begun as a proof of the innocence of the French government. One cannot resist comparing this epistle with the one sent to Whitworth after he had left Paris, and the use which was eventually made of it would seem to bear out this relationship.

Fearing that its hand would be forced before it was prepared and the Russians had arrived within striking distance, the cabinet of Vienna now decided on a measure which promised to delay matters sufficiently, while placing Napoleon in an embarrassing position. To Philip Cobenzl there was sent a "declaration" of Emperor Francis, in which he offered his good offices for the renewal of the negotiations with which Novosiltzov had been charged. The governments of Paris and St. Petersburg would reopen communication through Vienna, while the cabinet of Berlin would also be asked to concur.⁶⁵ It was one of that long series of attempts to force a "European" settlement upon France, to unite the powers of the Continent in restricting the great disturber in a fashion which each of them was individually incapable of accomplishing. If the proposition were refused categorically, it would be easy to make capital out of this apparent unwillingness to coöperate toward the re-establishment of peace and stability. To this end Philip Cobenzl was instructed to make all possible *éclat* about his master's offers, beginning by circulating copies throughout the diplomatic corps.

Napoleon did not fall into the trap, for he knew perfectly well that his opponent was continuing to arm. He was now at Boulogne, waiting anxiously for the arrival of his fleets so that he might attempt the crossing, but it would not do to leave the continent while in a state of complete uncertainty. This explains his determination to force the issue at a period when one would ordinarily expect him to be most anxious to gain time. If the invasion of England should not materialize, the ground would

⁶⁵ S.-A., FRANKREICH, 281 (IV-VII), fol. 128-129.

also be diplomatically prepared, so that he might cast himself upon the Danube monarchy without any further exchange of ultimata. If, on the other hand, the Hofburg should be intimidated by his threats, it would greatly facilitate the expedition against England. La Rochefoucauld's continued optimistic reports may still have given him some hope that peace would be preserved.⁶⁶ Within three days Talleyrand was twice ordered to demand a categorical answer to his ultimatum, though he was to proceed in such a fashion that Austria would still be in a position to give way:

I wish the troops of the House of Austria to retire into Bohemia and Hungary, and that I be permitted to make war upon England without being disturbed. . . . I should prefer above everything else that Austria place herself in a genuinely pacific position.⁶⁷

In two well-written notes Talleyrand sketched the situation of France, affirmed her pacific intentions, and threatened with war if an immediate and satisfactory reply were not returned. The Emperor was touched with the sentiments expressed in the Austrian declaration, but it looked as if England and Russia had enticed Austria into their net. Let the cabinet of Vienna do what Prussia has done: issue a declaration that it would in no case enter a hostile combination against France. Then England would soon be forced to make peace on the basis of that of Amiens, and the Emperor would carry out his pledge to separate the crowns of France and Italy. There were only 50,000 French troops in Italy, while the Rhine frontier was entirely denuded. If Austria persisted in keeping 70,000 men in Italy and mobilizing in Tyrol, France would have to consider this as a diversion in favor of England, "more efficacious and more onerous than open war," and the Emperor would be forced to wage a preven-

⁶⁶ On August 10 La Rochefoucauld was still protesting: "Il est certain que la Cour de Vienne ne veut pas la guerre; la position des ses finances lui paroît assez allarmante." The whole difficulty, maintained the ambassador, lay in the fact that a large part of its army was mobilized on the frontier, and the government did not know how the troops might be withdrawn without losing face. *A.E., AUTRICHE*, 377, no. 144.

⁶⁷ Aug. 12 and 15. *Corr.*, XI, nos. 9068, 9070.

tive and defensive conflict. The formal ultimatum submitted consisted of four points:

- 1) That the 21 regiments sent into Tyrol in the previous six months be withdrawn.
- 2) That all campaign fortifications be suspended.
- 3) That the troops in Styria, Carniola, Carinthia, and Venetia be reduced to the number of six months previously.
- 4) That a declaration be made to England affirming Austria's unalterable resolution to remain neutral.⁶⁸

Although desiring to avoid or at least postpone a rupture on the Continent, Napoleon did not for a moment fear its consequences. In writing to Cambacérès he exclaims: "It would indeed be madness for anyone to think of making war upon me. Beyond a doubt, there is no such wonderful army in Europe as that which I have today."⁶⁹ The army in Italy was not as prepared as it should have been for an arduous campaign,⁷⁰ but the road into the heart of Germany was mapped, provisioned, and open. Most important of all was the diplomatic preparation of South Germany, the great significance of which deserves separate treatment.

In as far as it concerned the relations with Austria Napoleon was less successful in the diplomatic game. The revival of the descent project in February brought with it the necessity, or at least desirability, of peace upon the Continent. But France did not succeed in preventing Austria from entering the coalition, and of this fact itself there was no certainty until after the war had actually begun. Yet the Emperor's deductions, based upon a soundly reasoned analysis of the facts known to him, were generally accurate enough to permit of a firm and

⁶⁸ Aug. 13 and 15, 1805. A.E., AUTRICHE, 377, nos. 152, 157; also given by Neumann, *Recueil des traités*, II, 167-173.

⁶⁹ Aug. 13, 1805. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9069.

⁷⁰ As shown by the anxious letters of Jourdan to Berthier. 11 thermidor and 6 fructidor an XIII (July 30 and Aug. 24, 1805). A.E., AUTRICHE, 377, nos. 114, 195.

consistent policy. It was the plan of the descent upon the English coast alone which saved Austria in the late spring and summer of 1805; it was only as a matter of second choice that Napoleon finally decided to "fight England in Germany." He was so magnificently sure of himself that the more than mediocre diplomacy of La Rochefoucauld caused little confusion in his plans. His ultimate movements were quite independent of diplomatic forms. When Cobenzl finally dared to reply to the French ultimatum, it was of no account that the sadly disillusioned French ambassador designated it as a war manifesto. Napoleon had not waited for it — a whole week earlier the Grand Army had broken camp and taken the route to Germany.

CHAPTER XVII

THE WOOING OF PRUSSIA

THE retirement of Count Haugwitz from the conduct of Prussian affairs did not portend any marked alteration in the policy of the cabinet of Berlin. The new head of the Department of Foreign Affairs was Baron von Hardenberg, a Hanoverian who had distinguished himself by administrative work in Franconia. In his memoirs Hardenberg insists that he never entirely agreed with the system of neutrality, but had preferred that Prussia should step energetically on to one side or the other. But the contemporary sources show him in quite a different light — very much a slave to the exigencies of the moment and totally lacking in consistency and direction.

When the new minister took over the reins of office, he was called into a conference with the King and Haugwitz. Frederick William made it very plain to him that there was to be no change whatever in the system of neutrality. This direct command somewhat offended Hardenberg, who later said to Haugwitz that he found it humiliating, in view of his known adhesion to the policy of his predecessor. Regarding this he is entirely silent in his memoirs, in which he speaks as if he entered office fired with the determination of cleaning out an Augean stable. For his guidance Haugwitz had prepared a memorandum which most strongly advised against a connection with any power that might lead to the renunciation of the neutrality system, especially an alliance with France.¹ Whether or not it was merely because of his desire to fortify his position, Hardenberg expressed himself in complete accord with such views in a letter to the King: "Your Majesty's political system is based upon loyalty and honor. Both from duty and inclination I will keep it unalterably before me." A little further on

¹ Hardenberg, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, V, 47, 289.

there can be discerned a slightly different note, such as would indicate a fundamental leaning toward a far more expansionist policy: "I will not enter upon the question whether there might be a policy more calculated for the glory and aggrandizement of the Prussian monarchy. Without doubt opinions can differ on this point."² This half-hidden declaration of more forward views than those which had previously characterized the policy of the court of Berlin must be continuously kept in mind if one wishes to understand the vacillations in the diplomacy of Hardenberg in the following years.

The plan of securing the peace of Europe by a defensive alliance with France having failed, Prussia retired still further within the armor of her system of neutrality. The late turn for the worse in the relations of France and Austria, provoked by the armaments of the latter against Bavaria, had given rise to the apprehension that a war might yet arise on the Continent. It was very evident that Napoleon had for the moment again turned his attention upon the affairs of the European mainland. Throughout this period there perennially recur moments of panic in the capitals of Central Europe, the fear being that France would feel obliged by the failure of her plans for an invasion of England to compensate herself by an attack on one of the continental powers. Early in 1804 this apprehension was particularly rife in Berlin.³ It was one of the principal reasons why the Prussian statesmen evidenced so much timidity in breaking off the alliance negotiations. To assure himself of the support of Russia against an attack by France, Frederick William on May 24 exchanged secret declara-

² Hardenberg, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, II, 72.

³ Prince William of Brunswick, who came to Carlsruhe in February, told the French minister, Massias, that there was much uneasiness in the Prussian capital concerning the intentions of the First Consul: "On y disait que suppose que l'expédition contre l'Angleterre ne put point avoir lieu dans la belle saison, le trois cent mille hommes qu'on avait rassemblés pour l'effectuer ne pourroient rester dans l'inaction, et que pour les occuper on ne demandait peut-être qu'un prétexte pour porter la guerre au nord de l'Allemagne, que pour occuper le Hanovre, le quart des trente huit milles cinq cent que la France y a envoyés était plus que suffisant." Massias to Talleyrand, 14 pluviôse an XII (Feb. 3, 1804). A.E., BADE, 6, no. 16.

tions with that country, pledging himself to join in war upon Napoleon if the forces in Hanover were augmented or the neutrality of further regions of North Germany violated. He was very careful to make it clear that every insignificant move on the part of the French was not to be considered in this light.

Napoleon of course realized that Russia would leave no stone unturned to draw Prussia into a position of open hostility against him. Hardenberg was believed to share the views of his predecessor, but it seemed well to acquire more definite assurance as to his sentiments.⁴ If war broke out between Napoleon and Alexander, which became exceedingly probable after the exchanges between France and Russia on the affair of Ettenheim, the Tsar would be sure to ask for a passage through Prussian territories. Talleyrand was therefore instructed to inquire of Lucchesini whether Prussia would tolerate such a violation of her neutrality. He was to point out the necessity of increasing the army of Hanover by 25,000 men if satisfactory guaranties were not given.⁵ Since the Prussian statesmen were most anxious to prevent such a measure, which under the terms of their declaration to Russia would indeed constitute a *casus foederis*, the promise was definitely given that neither the Russians nor anyone else would be permitted to violate Prussian territory.⁶

Napoleon was well pleased with this communication, and a period of the friendliest relations between the two countries ensued. On the Prussian side this was largely due to a change of opinion regarding the French Emperor. It was now believed that Napoleon was more anxious than the Tsar to preserve peace upon the Continent, as his new imperial dignity would have a stabilizing influence upon his expansive views. Harden-

⁴ Regarding the Prussian change of ministers, Talleyrand wrote to the Emperor: "M. Hardenberg qui lui succède n'a aucune disposition de contrarier ses vues, mais il n'a ni l'esprit, ni l'habitude, ni le crédit de M. de Haugwitz." Bertrand, *Lettres inédites*, p. 98.

⁵ May 13, 1804. *Corr.*, IX, no. 7746; Lucchesini's report of May 17. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 176.

⁶ Instructions to Lucchesini, May 24. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 178.

berg saw matters in the rosiest light, not even hesitating to express his confidence that general peace would soon be re-established. The exceedingly sharp French note to Russia, in which the death of Paul I was referred to, he characterized as very moderate and without insulting expressions, though breathing the language of a state which realized its own strength.⁷ On June 6 he presented a brief survey of the European situation to the King. Napoleon, he claimed, had no desire to go to war with any of the continental powers; Russia's negotiations with England were motivated by reasons of defense. Even Pitt's return to power was looked upon as a hopeful sign.⁸ Somewhat later he suggested the renewal of the alliance negotiations, and on September 6 Lucchesini, after being sharply rebuked for some forceful expressions he had used in a note to Talleyrand, was instructed to make another tentative toward a settlement of the question of Hanover.⁹ Thus the fall of 1804 found Prussia again inclined to consider a closer diplomatic understanding with France.

On the side of France a Prussian alliance also offered greater attractions than it had six months before. Russia had become so openly hostile that her entrance into a coalition with England could be only a matter of time. If the Tsar found an ally in Central Europe, an absolute necessity if he wished to fight more than a paper war against France, it appeared almost certain that it would be Austria. If France secured the alliance of Prussia, she would have nothing to fear from any combination which her enemies might succeed in forming against her upon the Continent. This was becoming increasingly evident at the time that the crisis in Germany had forced Napoleon to with-

⁷ Hardenberg to the King, May 24, 1804. *Ibid.*, II, 265. In his memoirs the minister speaks of the very same note as "voll von Unzüglichkeiten, Unwahrheiten, und Sophismen." Hardenberg, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, II, 63.

⁸ Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 183. Lucchesini is quite differently minded. All of his reports of this period maintain that Russia and France will go to war, that Napoleon is not in earnest about his descent projects and really desires a conflict upon the Continent.

⁹ *Ibid.*, II, no. 198.

draw his attention from his invasion schemes. Quite aside from the considerations of the moment, even he must have appreciated the value of a permanent and trustworthy ally, and for this position Prussia, for the time at least, appeared the only possible candidate. An arrangement with Russia was difficult because of the conflict of interests in the Near East. Humiliated in Germany and threatened with the loss of her last foothold in Italy, Austria could be won only by great concessions both on the basis of the status quo and in his ambitions. Prussia alone remained — thrown back from the Rhine, enriched with church properties, and gorged with Polish territories upon which Russia was casting avaricious eyes, she was the natural ally of France.

For a time Napoleon made no definite advances to renew the alliance negotiations. On August 30 he sent Count Arberg to Berlin to thank Frederick William for his unhesitating recognition of the Empire. In the letter presented by this envoy the ungracious sentiments of Austria were brought into contrast with those of Prussia.¹⁰ The purpose of the mission, however, was not merely complimentary. Arberg had instructions to suggest to the King that Prussia should also be erected into an empire. The proposal appears to have had a double purpose: it would flatter the Prussians even if rejected, while it would estrange the court of Berlin with Russia and Austria if it should receive a favorable response. For a time the plan was actually considered in Berlin, the court and even Hardenberg being inclined to favor it.¹¹ The customary timidity and innate modesty of the King, however, prevented its acceptance. Yet the mission was successful in pleasing the vanity of the Prussian statesmen; it was decided to return the compliment, and General Knobelsdorf was sent to Paris to congratulate Napoleon on his coronation.¹²

¹⁰ *Corr.*, IX, no. 7973.

¹¹ Laforest to Talleyrand, Oct. 19, 1804. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 206.

¹² The King to Hardenberg, Oct. 20. *Ibid.*, II, no. 209.

Europe was suddenly thrown into a furor of excitement by an event which threatened to embroil France and Prussia. The British agent at Hamburg, Sir George Rumbold, had been engaging in activities that interfered with the administration of the French in Hanover, not even hesitating to tamper with the French troops. The indignation which the conduct of Drake and Smith had aroused throughout Germany probably encouraged Napoleon to follow the line of action he now adopted. On the night of October 24 Rumbold was arrested in his villa on the Elbe and transported to Paris, where he was imprisoned in the Temple. The news soon reached Berlin, creating a tremendous sensation. The King of Prussia was the Director of the Lower Saxon Circle within the limits of which the Englishman had been arrested, and the occurrence was considered a direct insult. Hardenberg, only recently so favorable to France, changed his tone completely. "It is clear that this fool is striving for universal monarchy," he raged to Metternich, and spoke of an alliance of the three eastern powers. The King was urged to order a partial mobilization of his troops and to send a threatening letter to Paris.¹³ Such measures were not to the taste of Frederick William, for the fear of a rupture with France was always before his eyes. His letter of protest was candid and dignified, emphasizing chiefly the personal injury he had suffered.¹⁴ The effect it produced in Paris was probably greater than that of a sharp note would have been. Napoleon, who had already established the reputation of being uncompromising, on this occasion conducted himself in a manner as moderate as it was wise. Only shortly before he had expressed his wish to Talleyrand "to show constant marks of regard for Prussia,"¹⁵ and his opportunity for a public act of condescension had now arrived. Rumbold, though deprived of his papers, was released without a moment's delay and conducted to the coast. The reply to Frederick William's letter

¹³ Hardenberg, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, I, 497; II, 89-94.

¹⁴ Oct. 30, 1804. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 216.

¹⁵ Oct. 27, 1804. *Corr.*, X, no. 8143.

was a masterpiece in composition. He spoke at length of his regret at the pain which had been caused the Prussian monarch, and characterized the incident as "one of the most unhappy of his life."¹⁶ The joyous surprise of the court of Berlin equaled its previous indignation. Lombard, who for once had shared the general feeling against France, overflowed with emotion in a letter to Laforest, designating the Emperor's epistle as a "discourse of nobility and friendliness, the effect of which is irresistible."¹⁷

While Napoleon thus averted the worst consequences of his rashness, the impression produced throughout Germany by the incident was nevertheless very unfavorable. It was unfortunate for Napoleon that the papers of Rumbold, which had been expressly retained for the purpose, did not offer anything much of a nature to justify the procedure against him. Grand Judge Regnier reported that the documents submitted to him did not offer enough of interest to motivate a publication or even mention in the newspapers. Rumbold's seizure having caused so much noise, the publication of his papers would be advisable only if they decisively showed the "object of his mission."¹⁸

Austria and Russia had of course jumped at the chance to win Prussia away from France. Metternich, ambassador to Berlin since November of 1803, was instructed to declare that his master was prepared to coöperate with Frederick William in exacting satisfaction from Napoleon. Alopeus spoke of a general alliance against France. The British took advantage of the incident to cultivate all three of the continental powers. On November 4 official notes of protest were addressed to Prussia and Austria, while special instructions were drawn up for Jackson at Berlin and Gower at St. Petersburg. The recent firmness of the cabinet of Berlin being encouraging, Jackson was to urge the King to endeavor to form a closer connection

¹⁶ Nov. 10, 1804. *Ibid.*, X, no. 8170.

¹⁷ Nov. 20, 1804. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 225.

¹⁸ Rapport du Grand Juge, brumaire an XIII (October-November, 1804). A.E., ANGLETERRE, supplément 15, no. 89. Rumbold's papers are also in this dossier.

with Russia for the purpose of "securing the North of Germany against further encroachments." He was to explain the English views more fully than previously and to state

. . . distinctly the readiness of His Majesty to afford pecuniary assistance to Prussia, in case she should enter into a defensive concert with other powers and should in consequence of that concert be engaged in war with France.

Frederick William was also to be importuned to permit Gustavus of Sweden to put his German dominions in a "posture of defence."¹⁹ The dispatch to Gower represented the seizure of Rumbold as a particular insult to the Tsar:

It is not, however, by any means, the wish of His Majesty to induce the Court of St. Petersburg to forsake at once its system of moderation, and to bring its armies into action at a season of the year ill calculated for exertion, and before any plans have been arranged, by which the coöperation of either of the great German powers has been secured. But you cannot press too earnestly the absolute and urgent necessity of employing the interval of winter in endeavoring, by more precise explanation and more distinct overtures, to procure at least a defensive concert — and particularly in bringing the negotiations with the Court of Vienna to a point.²⁰

The importance of these dispatches lies less in their relation to the unquestioned fact that England was now feverishly attempting to secure allies upon the Continent than in that they were intercepted by the French. Napoleon now knew for the first time how far the formation of a coalition against him had proceeded; that Russia was already all but gained; that there were negotiations between the courts of St. Petersburg and Vienna, in which the adhesion of the latter to the hostile combination seemed to be considered probable; that England was anxious to take advantage of his faux pas to gain his last friend, Prussia. It is hardly probable that he had knowledge of these documents on the day of the arrival of Frederick

¹⁹ Harrowby to Francis Jackson, Nov. 4 and 5, 1804. A.E., ANGLETERRE, 602, nos. 59, 70.

²⁰ Harrowby to Gower, Nov. 5, 1804. *Ibid.*, 602, no. 71.

William's letter of protest, and thus they cannot have exercised an influence on the decision to release Rumbold. But his policy was nevertheless profoundly affected. The fact that Austria seemed inclined to declare against him may have been the deciding factor in his determination to consolidate his position in Italy. The realization of the part played by England as the fountainhead of coalitions must have recurred to him with unusual force, and the enthusiasm with which he soon after took up the revived descent project is evidence of his conviction that the island kingdom would have to be reached directly. Of final significance is that the alliance or neutrality of Prussia became infinitely more precious to him, for it was conclusively shown by the intercepted papers that Frederick William had not yet taken sides.

The French occupation of Hanover having again proved to be a disturbing factor in the relations of the continental states, the cabinet of Berlin determined to renew its efforts for an evacuation and the consequent occupation by Prussian troops. But the negotiations on the point bore no fruit, for Napoleon maintained that his evacuation would only serve to make peace with England more difficult. Instead he flattered the more selfish interests of Prussia by convincing Lucchesini that he shared the King's views on the exchange of Hanover for his territories in Westphalia.²¹ He thereby touched the weak point in the policy of Hardenberg, for the minister was the most declared exponent of the principle that Prussia would have to expand in proportion to her neighbors if she did not wish to decline.²² While France was more to be feared than Russia and consequently had more to offer in her friendship, it was also in coöperation with her alone that the desired aggrandizement could be effected. On the other hand stood the fear of Prussia's dependent position in an alliance with France, as well as the feeling that the cause of the powers opposed to Napoleon was

²¹ Report of Lucchesini, Dec. 10, 1804. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 234.

²² Cf. Hardenberg to Lucchesini, Dec. 25, 1804. *Ibid.*, II, no. 236.

the more solid one. Thus Hardenberg found himself in a continual dilemma, which explains the inconsistency of his policy during the ensuing year. Metternich gaged the minister correctly when he told the Russian Wintzingerode that it was necessary to differentiate between the individual and the "homme publique," that while Hardenberg persisted in expressing sentiments in perfect accord with the views of the coalitionary powers, he was guided by entirely different considerations when it came to acting upon them.²³ To prove his sincerity in working for the restoration of peace, Napoleon in December and again in January renewed his declaration of willingness to accept the mediation of Prussia. Hardenberg urged Alopeus to take up the negotiations, but the Russian declared that he would have to take the suggestion ad referendum, as the Tsar had not yet made known the conditions on which he would be willing to treat.²⁴ The exchanges between Berlin and St. Petersburg had of late been taking on a decidedly acid tone. Alexander complained of supposed preparations of Prussia on her eastern frontier and allowed a threatening note to creep into his language. Frederick William replied that the purchases of grain referred to were intended to avert a local famine and evidenced his great pain at being the object of such suspicions.²⁵

The situation was made worse by the threatening attitude of Prussia toward Sweden, who was continuing her armaments in Pomerania. On December 24 a note had been presented to Brinckmann, the Swedish chargé d'affaires at Berlin, in which the occupation of the province was spoken of. The Russians decided to take advantage of this development to enlighten the court of Berlin on the true state of their sentiments. Wintzingerode, one of the Emperor's aides-de-camp, was sent to the

²³ Metternich to Colloredo, Feb. 18, 1805. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Jan.-April), fol. 90-96.

²⁴ Laforest to Hardenberg, Jan. 22; Hardenberg to Alopeus, Jan. 28; Alopeus to Hardenberg, Jan. 29, 1805. *Ibid.*, fol. 62-65, 76-78.

²⁵ Alexander to the King, Dec. 22, 1804; the King to Alexander, Jan. 4, 1805. Bailleu, *Briefwechsel*, nos. 57, 58.

Prussian capital. The ostensible purpose of the mission was to warn the King against precipitate action toward Sweden. The instructions of Alopeus, however, reveal the kernel of the arrangement proposed by Russia. Prussia was to combine with the other eastern powers in a defensive alliance based on the guarantee of all of Germany. The *casus foederis* was to come into effect not only, as in the November convention between Russia and Austria, if France made further aggressions in North Germany, Naples, or against the Porte, but also if the French occupied Switzerland or if Napoleon bound Holland or any part of Germany to himself or a member of his house, as well as if he made evident an intention to have himself crowned Emperor of Germany.²⁶

Wintzingerode arrived at Berlin on February 17 and immediately got into touch with Metternich, who was to remain in the background though impressing upon the Prussian statesmen that Austria shared the views of Russia. Much hope was placed upon the coöperation of Hardenberg, who had been so strong in his expressions since the Rumbold affairs that Metternich opined he was now personally compromised in the cause of the coalition: "After the positive and reiterated assurances of his desire for the formation of our concert every step backward will be at the expense of his personal honor." Wintzingerode spoke of Alexander's dissatisfaction with Alopeus, who showed too little energy in driving the court of Prussia in the desired direction. The Tsar, he said, was no longer the man of the days of Memel. Though he was still personally attached to the King, his way of looking at political questions was not thereby affected: "We are determined not to suffer the neutrality of Prussia in case of war."²⁷

The negotiations between Hardenberg, Wintzingerode, and Alopeus soon arrived at a point where the full sweep of the policy of Russia stood revealed. Prussia was not trusted to the

²⁶ F. Martens, *Recueils des traités . . . conclus par la Russie*, VI, 356.

²⁷ Metternich to Colloredo, Feb. 12 and 18, 1805. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Jan.-April), fol. 82-87, 90-96.

extent of being told about the November convention, for the allies were at first far from sure that there was not a secret understanding between Paris and Berlin. The overtures did not cause much surprise, but none of the Prussian statesmen showed any inclination to give up the neutrality system. Haugwitz, who was especially called in by the King, advised that the proposals should be rejected, but that the refusal should be tempered so as to prevent a rupture of the thread leading to St. Petersburg. Hardenberg presented a long memorandum on the question, the gist of which was that if war broke out as the result of French aggressions *anywhere*, Prussia's best bet would be to give up her neutrality in favor of the coalition, but that as long as any hope for peace existed it would be folly to throw away the valuable friendship of Napoleon.²⁸ The reply to the Russian suggestions therefore rejected the idea of a concert against France, though expressing the willingness to enter into a public guarantee of all of Germany against everyone.

Great was the disgust at St. Petersburg and Vienna. Alexander had by now made his arrangements with England, and the basis offered by Prussia was no longer satisfactory. The resentment against Hardenberg was particularly strong, for the minister was understood to have promised Wintzingerode to convert the King to the impossibility of maintaining his neutrality and the necessity of taking up arms against Napoleon.²⁹ From now on Hardenberg is usually classed with Haugwitz to their mutual disadvantage in the communications between the Russian and Austrian diplomats.

Of importance for the future policy of the coalitionary powers was the conviction that nothing further was to be gained from Prussia by negotiation. As it now appeared certain that no secret agreement existed between the courts of Paris and Berlin, it would surely be possible to force the latter at the decisive moment to side with the allies. This thesis was par-

²⁸ Hardenberg, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, II, 138-149.

²⁹ Wintzingerode's report of March 5, 1805. F. Martens, *Recueil des traités* . . . *conclus par la Russie*, VI, 359.

ticularly supported by Metternich, whose reports may have been the deciding influence in gaining a favorable hearing from Cobenzl to the propositions of this nature put forward soon after by Wintzingerode. When Russia disembarked troops in Pomerania or marched them upon the Prussian frontier, the court of Berlin would surely give way: "It is up to the two united powers to carry away His Prussian Majesty, and the certainty that they will succeed when they consider the proper time to have arrived cannot be put in question."³⁰

While Prussia was thus coquetting with the powers of the coalition, the negotiations for an agreement upon Hanover were proceeding at Paris. But Frederick William was not successful in persuading Napoleon to evacuate the Electorate, while the Emperor was unable to secure a sweeping endorsement of his policy. On the other hand, exchanges of amiabilities and compliments were frequent. On the suggestion of Napoleon, the two sovereigns exchanged a number of their chief decorations to be distributed among those whom they wished to honor. This policy, however, was not limited by Napoleon to Prussia, but played a part in his relations with all the states which were friendly to him, or whose sentiments, as with Austria, he wished to put to the test.³¹ In the case of Prussia it led to further ill feeling between the courts of Berlin and Stockholm, for Gustavus seized this opportunity to humiliate the Corsican upstart by sending back his own order of the Black Eagle with the remark that he would not share it with "*Napoléon Bonaparte et ses semblables*."³² Frederick William considered himself to have been placed in this class — the Prussian minister was withdrawn from Stockholm, and Hardenberg was obliged to cease all communication with Brinckmann.

So cautious had the Prussian statesmen become of any pub-

³⁰ Metternich to Colloredo, March 24, 1805. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Jan.-April), fol. 148-153, 178.

³¹ The plan for these exchanges is contained in outline in a note to Talleyrand of January 30, 1805. *Corr.*, X, no. 8297.

³² Gustavus to Frederick William, April 22, 1805. *Paget Papers*, II, 170-71; S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (May-August), fol. 25.

lic approval or guarantee of the position of France in any quarter of Europe, that they refused to give a full recognition to the new Italian kingdom. Their conduct in this regard was also dictated by the desire to reassure the eastern courts by proving that Prussia had not rejected their advances out of complacency toward France. Frederick William therefore replied to Napoleon's notification on his new dignity by a cordial but reserved letter, which left the initiative of recognition to states more directly interested, "such as Austria."³³ The Prussians might have gone even further than this and have refrained from sending an envoy to the coronation at Milan, but the conduct of the court of Vienna, which left Metternich entirely without instructions as to what course he was to recommend and evidently was unable to decide what it would do itself, gave them pause. It was Napoleon's opportunity to play upon the jealousy which persisted in creeping up between the German powers. Laforest announced everywhere that Emperor Francis had recognized Napoleon as King of Italy, and Metternich, who had not even been informed of his master's letter, found himself in a position in which he could not affirm or deny anything.³⁴ The suspicion was almost openly voiced to Metternich that Austria was trying to embroil her rival with the French while she would show herself more accommodating on a question which concerned her so much more nearly. Under the pretext of the necessity of delivering the orders of the Black Eagle in person, Lucchesini was therefore permitted to proceed to Milan, as was Humboldt, the Prussian minister at Rome.

A last attempt to settle the quarrel between France and Russia by mediation was made by Frederick William in the spring of 1805. Alexander had requested Prussian assistance to make the mission of Novosiltzov a possibility. Besides the

³³ Though Metternich was much pleased with the Prussian letter, the Viennese government was less so. Colloredo in a letter to Philip Cobenzl complains that "... avec l'astuce habituelle à ce cabinet, on en rejette l'odieux sur nous." June 26, 1805. S.-A., *FRANKREICH*, 281 (IV-VII), fol. 62.

³⁴ Metternich's correspondence abounds in lamentations and complaints on the manner in which Austria was being compromised. Reports of March 26 and 30, April 9, 23, and 27, 1805. S.-A., *PREUSSEN*, 82.

reasons for this mission already mentioned, one of its main objectives was to compromise Prussia in the eyes of Napoleon by committing her to the proposals made by the envoy. Both the King and Hardenberg showed a lack of their usual caution in this affair, not even insisting upon knowing the conditions which were to be proposed to Napoleon and relying entirely on the Tsar's assurance that they were acceptable.³⁵ It was without this vital information that the King wrote to Napoleon, requesting him to grant Novosiltzov the necessary passports and access to his person.³⁶ As it was one of Napoleon's guiding principles that Prussia should be convinced at every turn of his pacific intentions, he readily granted what was asked, though declaring plainly that he had little hope for the success of the mission, there being little prospect of the conditions' being such as could be considered.³⁷ It may have been fortunate for Prussia that Novosiltzov returned to St. Petersburg when the news of the annexation of Genoa arrived.³⁸

July opened with an ever darkening political horizon. Russian troops were gathering in increasing numbers on the eastern frontiers of Prussia, and the rumor was current that they were to join the Swedes in an invasion of Hanover. Metternich, returning from a brief visit to Dresden, found Hardenberg an entirely changed man, who complained about the silence at St. Petersburg and Vienna and that no further confidence was to be placed in Napoleon.³⁹ The minister now announced to Larforest that Prussia would not repel an attack upon the army of Bernadotte if the neutrality of the other North German states

³⁵ Alexander to Frederick William. April 11, 1805. Bailieu, *Briefwechsel*, no. 62.

³⁶ April 28, 1805. Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, Appendix I.

³⁷ May 9, 1805. *Corr.*, X, no. 8705.

³⁸ The annexation of Genoa was only the ostensible reason for the recall of Novosiltzov, the real cause being the withdrawal by the British of their agreement to treat on the basis of the evacuation of Malta. In his instructions to Novosiltzov, Czartoryski expressly states that the difference in the points of view of England and Russia made negotiations with France difficult and would only serve to compromise the Tsar. *Sbornik*, LXXXII, 10, 75, 77, 79.

³⁹ Metternich to Colloredo, July 23, 1805. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (May-August), fol. 292-293.

were not violated.⁴⁰ The French forces were thus exposed to invasions of the Electorate from the sea or from Pomerania. The Prussian alliance had in other respects also gained in value. Napoleon was at that moment at Boulogne anxiously awaiting the arrival of Villeneuve's fleet to attempt the crossing. He had just ordered the delivery of his first ultimatum to Philip Cobenzl; if Austria should decide against him it would be necessary to use Bernadotte's corps in South Germany or to defend the line of the Rhine. Hanover would thus be lost in any case. If by sacrificing his precarious hold upon the Electorate he could gain the alliance of Prussia, he would assure his position upon the Continent until after his return from the English expedition. The arguments which he now used to gain the coöperation of Frederick William III show an excellent understanding of that monarch's character. The main emphasis was placed upon the fact that a Franco-Prussian alliance was the only possibility of preserving peace, for Russia and Austria would never dare to move against it. He pointed out that Prussia needed a field over which she could expand, Austria having such a one in the Balkans, and Russia in Persia. These countries, he affirmed, were the natural enemies of a growing Prussia, while France could and wished to help her in her expansion and consolidation. The efficacy of these arguments can be judged from the fact that Lucchesini, who had always been a pessimist on the chances of maintaining peace on the Continent and had insisted in continued reports that Napoleon was not sincere about his descent project, was now completely converted and saw in the Emperor's proposals the only possible means of pacification.⁴¹

A plan of alliance in which Prussia received Hanover while assuring the peace of the Continent inevitably held a tremendous appeal for the court of Berlin. The irritation over the failure of Novosiltzov's mission had turned more against Rus-

⁴⁰ Hardenberg, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, I, 506.

⁴¹ Lucchesini to Hardenberg, July 29; Talleyrand to Laforest, July 30, 1805. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 261.

sia than against France. The annexation of Genoa does not seem to have caused much agitation, so that the recall of the envoy after Prussia had done so much to assure the success of his mission could not but create surprise.⁴² Even greater was the annoyance which resulted from the realization that the allies had imposed upon Prussia to lead her into a trap. The communication of the terms of the convention of London after the details of the mission had all been arranged brought to light that the coalitionary powers had intended to offer conditions which could not possibly be accepted. The resentment at the advantage which had been taken of Frederick William's pacific sentiments was quite frankly expressed in the letter which that monarch now wrote to Alexander. How could one, considering the position of France and the character of her ruler, ever have expected that she would treat on this basis? "Would Napoleon have renounced the material advantages over which he actually disposed in return for such feeble sacrifices on the part of England? I doubt it and I would be more inclined to believe that it would require several successful campaigns before one could obtain such concessions." Prussia was absolutely determined to remain neutral if war should now break out.⁴³

Nor did the conduct of the Austrians tend to excite the enthusiasm of the Prussians for the cause of the allies. In the course of the rigorous recruitment at Vienna, from fifty to sixty Prussians were seized, who, when they showed their papers and passports to prove their nationality, had them burned in their presence. The ambassador, Keller, protested, but without avail. "The Vice-Chancellor," reports Paget, "expressed himself in terms so rude, so disagreeable, and so unfriendly towards the court of Berlin, that Count Finckenstein thought it prudent

⁴² George Jackson writes on July 7: "The affair of Genoa creates apparently no uneasy feeling at this court, notwithstanding the agitation it has caused at St. Petersburg." *Diaries and Letters*, I, 303. Yet about the same time his brother was assuring the Austrian chargé d'affaires that the Prussian cabinet entirely approved the conduct of Novosiltzov. Baron von Binder to Colloredo, July 16, 1805. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (May-August), fol. 198-200.

⁴³ July 14, 1805. Bailleu, *Briefwechsel*, no. 62.

to conceal it as much as possible from the [Prussian] minister."⁴⁴

The idea of an alliance with France which would restrain Russia and Austria and secure the long-desired aggrandizement was thus received with almost universal approval by the Prussian statesmen. The prospect of maintaining peace probably played the most important part in the considerations of Frederick William, and the acquisition of Hanover in those of his ministers. They now hoped to add to Napoleon's project a guarantee of the independence of Switzerland, Holland, Etruria, the States of the Church, and the Austrian possessions in Italy. With such an arrangement Austria would be satisfied, Russia would be forced to content herself, and Prussia would have raised her prestige to unheard-of heights. On August 9 Laforest had an extended conference with Hardenberg at the latter's estate of Tempelberg and came away with the conviction that the minister had been completely won over.⁴⁵ The ambassador now prepared a long memorandum, which he dated August 8 in order to make it appear that all of Hardenberg's remaining doubts and objections had previously been divined.⁴⁶

On August 14 Hardenberg was able to inform Laforest of the essential agreement of the Prussian government with the views enunciated by the Emperor, but he laid the greatest emphasis on the guarantee which seemed so necessary to the stability of Europe.⁴⁷ Yet Prussia habitually hesitated after an apparently resolute step had been taken. The timid counsels of the "private cabinet" of the King again came to be heard. Lombard was then absent from Berlin, but Beyme composed two memoranda which advised the greatest caution, for Russia might decide to make war in spite of a Franco-Prussian alliance, and

⁴⁴ To Mulgrave, Aug. 1, 1805. *Paget Papers*, II, 203.

⁴⁵ Laforest to Talleyrand, Aug. 10, 1805. Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 263.

⁴⁶ Presented on August 12. *Ibid.*, II, no. 262. Hardenberg, in possession of the document dated August 8, speaks of it as being delivered on that day. *Denkwürdigkeiten*, II, 178.

⁴⁷ Laforest to Talleyrand, Aug. 14. Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 265.

Napoleon would not regret seeing Prussia bear most of the burden of a conflict directed against himself.⁴⁸

On August 22 a conference took place between Hardenberg, the Duke of Brunswick, and Schulemburg at Halberstadt, in which the latter two were largely converted to the minister's views. The guarantee of Prussia, however, was to be further limited so as to apply only in case of an Austrian attack upon France in Italy.⁴⁹ Haugwitz, who in spite of his retirement retained the confidence of his master, was the only one of the Prussian statesmen to oppose the project of the French alliance in principle. But matters were still undecided when the French armies began their dash on the Rhine. The whole Prussian plan had in fact already become impossible, as Austria had now definitely joined the coalition; on the very day of the conference of Halberstadt the first Russian troops entered Galicia.

With the failure of his grand project of invading England and the launching of the continental coalition against him, the part played by the Prussian alliance in Napoleon's political system became a very different one. The great North German power was now expected to play an offensive instead of a defensive role. A continental peace no longer entered into the Emperor's calculations, for it could only lead to the limitation of his orbit at a time when he desired its expansion, in order to regain the prestige lost by the descent fiasco. Prussia must serve as his outpost against Russia, menace Austria from the northeast, and protect Hanover against the English and Swedes. To gain the court of Berlin to such an arrangement, Napoleon decided to send Duroc to the Prussian capital. On August 23 he wrote an extended letter to the King, defining the purpose of his confidant's mission and announcing his intention of advancing into South Germany.⁵⁰ The next day Duroc received his instructions, in which the basis for the proposed alliance was laid down. The Emperor declared that he would give no guar-

⁴⁸ Aug. 16 and 18, 1805. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, nos. 267, 268.

⁴⁹ Hardenberg, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, V, 167.

⁵⁰ *Corr.*, XI, no. 9116.

antee of Switzerland and Holland; Naples he would not even discuss. The only promise Duroc was empowered to make was that, in case of a successful war, no German territory would be annexed to the French Empire. The envoy was not to insist upon an immediate declaration of war against Austria, but should demand that she be disturbed by diplomatic menaces and military demonstrations on the Bohemian border.⁵¹ Laforest was to be informed by Talleyrand that Duroc would take the principal part in the negotiations.⁵² Yet they were not to play the decisive rôle in the campaign of 1805 that might have been expected, for the goal Napoleon now set himself no longer accorded with the views of the cabinet of Berlin.

⁵¹ Aug. 24. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9126.

⁵² Aug. 24. *Ibid.*, XI, no. 9127.

CHAPTER XVIII

FORTUNE TAKES A HOLIDAY — THE INVASION PROJECT (1805)

For two years France has been making the greatest sacrifices that could be demanded of her and she has borne up under them. A general war on the continent could require no more. I have the strongest army, the most complete military organization, and I am now placed just as I should need to be if war were to break out on the Continent. But in order, in time of peace, to be able to assemble such forces — to have 20,000 artillery horses and entire baggage trains — some pretext must be found for creating and assembling them without allowing the continental powers to take alarm. Such a pretext was furnished by this projected invasion of England. I am well aware that to maintain these artillery horses in time of peace is to throw thirty millions to the dogs; but today I have twenty days advantage of all my enemies, and I could be a month in the field before Austria bought artillery horses. I should not have been able to say this to you two years ago, and yet it was even then my sole aim.¹

Such, affirms one of his councilors, was the declaration of the Emperor at a meeting of the Council of State in January of 1805, and on this statement more than one historian has based his conclusion that the project of invading England was a sham from its very inception. Yet, though the preparations of the Austrians continued without a halt through the spring and summer of 1805, though Napoleon knew in June that they had purchased 16,000 horses to complete their cavalry and artillery,² though he was almost certain in July that they had decided upon war and that Russia was about to move, the Emperor delayed month after month, repeatedly concerting with Talleyrand how a little more time might be gained. It is difficult to comprehend how Fournier and other prominent authori-

¹ Miot de Mérito, *Mémoires* (1858), II, 258. It must be noted that Miot, whose memoirs are by no means entirely reliable, is the only one of the Council to report so significant a statement.

² From the report of a French agent at Trieste, 14 prairial an XIII (June 3, 1805). A.E., AUTRICHE, 377, no. 15.

ties who have accepted the above evidence as conclusive on the question in point could have neglected so completely to correlate it with the situation in which Napoleon found himself at the time of this pronouncement. Austria had just established her "sanitary cordon," and no one could foretell her reaction to the announcement of the creation of the Kingdom of Italy with Joseph Bonaparte as its sovereign. French troops were moving into Italy, the fortresses of Lombardy were being placed in a condition of defense — an unfriendly answer to the Emperor's recent letter to the Austrian sovereign would probably have resulted in war. Coincidentally, overtures for peace negotiations had been made to England. Whether the developments of the following weeks should result in general peace or a continental war, in either case it was desirable to find an adequate apology for the enormous sacrifices which France had made in order to realize the project of invasion. Napoleon found it convenient to hide his failure while appearing omniscient; he preferred to be regarded as the instigator of a continental war rather than to suffer in his prestige.

With the death of Latouche-Tréville all hope of carrying out the descent upon England during the year 1804 had been given up. But the fleets which had been fitted out with so much care and expense could hardly remain idle, and it seemed best to employ them in colonial expeditions. Admiral Villeneuve was transferred from the Rochefort to the far more important Toulon squadron, his place being taken by Admiral Missiessy.³ Before the end of September the Emperor had drawn up a plan of action for these fleets: that of Toulon was to sail for the Dutch colony of Surinam and that of Rochefort for Martinique.⁴ In the final instructions, issued to Villeneuve and Missiessy in January of the following year, there is no hint of their operations' being linked with the project of a descent upon England. The latter succeeded in getting out of Rochefort, but the departure of Villeneuve, planned for the eighteenth, could

³ To Decrès, Sept. 3, 1804. *Corr.*, IX, no. 7896.

⁴ To Decrès, Sept. 29, 1804. *Ibid.*, IX, nos. 8060, 8062, 8063.

not be effected because of storms and contrary winds, and he was still in port when the plan of invasion was again taken up in March. This was in part the result of the Emperor of Austria's letter, which reassured Napoleon as to the danger of an immediate war upon the Continent, but it can be traced even more directly to the assurance which France now received of the effectiveness of Spain as a maritime ally.

By the Treaty of St. Ildefonso Spain had engaged herself to assist France in the event of another war with Great Britain, but in Madrid there had been little enthusiasm for renewed hostilities upon the rupture of the Peace of Amiens. In August of 1803 the First Consul had summoned the Prince of Peace in a harsh note to remember his treaty obligations. Godoy, however, demonstrated an unusual degree of independence; he had already spoken to Beurnonville earlier in the year of the disadvantages of the French alliance. But Napoleon knew his man too well to be at a loss as to what to do. The concentration of troops at Bayonne under the command of Augereau went forward rapidly. Even more effective was a letter to the King of Spain, which complained of the prime minister in unmeasured terms and did not shrink from hinting at his illicit relations with the Queen. This epistle Godoy managed to smuggle from beneath the eyes of his master, but his panic was such that he now yielded to everything which was demanded of him. On October 19 a treaty was signed at Paris by Talleyrand and the Spanish ambassador, Azara, in which His Catholic Majesty pledged himself to pay a subsidy of 6,000,000 francs per month to the French Republic for the duration of the war.⁵ At this price the First Consul was willing to release Spain from her obligation to join in the war, especially as the coöperation of the Spanish navy was not valued very highly at that time. Spain was thus whipped into line, although from time to time it proved necessary to resort to threats and menaces to maintain her subservience.⁶

⁵ Driault, *Napoléon et l'Europe: la politique extérieure*, p. 439.

⁶ To Talleyrand, *Corr.*, IX, nos. 7311, 7534, 7563.

Thus matters stood when late in 1804 England forced Spain into the war by one of those high-handed acts for which her maritime policy was then notorious. The British had been far from anxious to align the Spanish navy, the third largest in existence, on the side of the French. But when the arrangement of October 19 became known to him, Frere, their ambassador at Madrid, protested that it would be impossible for his government to tolerate payment of such vast amounts to France. In vain did the slippery Godoy confide to the British ambassador that he had not yet paid anything to France and that it would be a long time before France would receive any of the promised subsidy. On October 4, 1804, without any previous announcement of hostilities, a Spanish treasure fleet was intercepted by a superior British squadron and the ships either captured or sunk. Spain immediately declared war, but for the moment her entry into the conflict did not change the aspect of the naval situation for Napoleon. Neither he nor Decrès had much confidence in the Spanish navy, which had not shown up any too well in the last war. But the Spaniards, whose pride had been deeply wounded, threw themselves into the struggle with unexpected determination. Chief among them was the able and gallant Admiral Gravina, who performed prodigies in improving shipyards and fitting out vessels. In the same week that Napoleon received the reassuring letter of Emperor Francis, there also arrived in Paris a report from the French ambassador at Madrid, Beurnonville. In this dispatch the Spanish navy was described in a light which far surpassed all previous calculations — of ships of the line alone, Spain would be able to arm thirty-one, in place of the anticipated twenty.⁷

Napoleon was quick to see the significance of this factor for his plan of combining naval operations with the project of a descent upon England. While the preparations for a campaign in Italy and on the Rhine were suspended, the naval forces of the Empire took on unequalled activity. On February

⁷ Feb. 4, 1805. The entire dispatch is given by Desbrière, *Projets et tentatives*, IV, 357.

23 the Emperor wrote to Marshal Junot, then about to pass through Spain on his way to Portugal: "What I expect from the Prince of Peace is only one thing — that the Spanish fleets be ready for the great expeditions which I am meditating."⁸ On the twenty-seventh the order went to Marshal Soult to prepare an exact report on the condition of the flotilla and of the ports of Boulogne, Wimereux, and Ambleteuse.⁹ During the same day Decrès sent orders to Missiessy at Martinique to remain in the Antilles until the end of June to await information on the now vastly extended operations.

A complete revision of the old plan of operations was necessary, for the project which had been confided to Latouche-Tréville had been made impracticable by the departure of the Rochefort squadron. Napoleon was able to draw an actual advantage from the altered circumstances. Villeneuve was now to break the blockade at Toulon, join a squadron of six Spanish ships at Cadiz, and proceed across the Atlantic to the West Indies. At the same time Ganteaume was to escape from Brest, rally the ships at Rochefort and Ferrol, and join Villeneuve at Martinique.¹⁰ In Villeneuve's instructions there is no word about any connection of the operations with the descent upon England; only Ganteaume and the Emperor's personal representative with the Toulon fleet, General Lauriston, were taken into confidence. On March 23 the embarkation began at Brest. Ganteaume, the only one of Napoleon's admirals with much taste for fighting, offered to attack the British blockading squadron, which at that time numbered only fifteen ships, with his twenty-one, but the Emperor telegraphed from Paris that a victory would lead to nothing and that he should try to escape without fighting. The British were too watchful, however, and Ganteaume was forced to return to Brest on the same day. More fortunate was Villeneuve, who not only escaped from Toulon, but was able to deceive Nelson regarding his destina-

⁸ *Corr.*, X, no. 8617.

⁹ *Ibid.*, X, no. 8639.

¹⁰ Instructions to Ganteaume and to Villeneuve, March 2, 1805. *Ibid.*, X, no. 8379, 8381.

tion. The great English admiral had long been expecting another Egyptian expedition, and Napoleon had been careful to encourage this assumption by such means as inspired notices in the press.¹¹ Villeneuve arrived at Martinique on May 13, two days after Nelson had realized his error and begun the long trek across the Atlantic in pursuit of him. It having been impossible for Ganteaume to evade the blockading squadron, Admiral Magon was sent after Villeneuve with new instructions. If within a month after the arrival of Magon in the Antilles no further orders had arrived from France, Villeneuve was to set sail for Europe, release the blockaded squadrons at Ferrol and Brest, and appear before Boulogne.¹² Three days after the departure of Magon, provided with instructions of similar import for General Lauriston, Napoleon, receiving news which inclined him to believe that Nelson had gone to Egypt, dispatched a frigate with orders to his admiral to attack the British colonies in the West Indies. It was now too late to do much in the Antilles, however, for the British islands were fully warned and prepared for defense. Villeneuve then decided to take advantage of the instructions brought by Magon; on June 7 he set sail for Europe. Nelson, who had arrived at Barbados on the fourth, heard of this departure on the thirteenth; and in a few hours he had himself weighed anchor and started after his intended prey. The brig "Curious" was dispatched to warn the admiralty of the situation. This vessel sighted the allied fleet on the nineteenth and noticed that it was heading further north than Nelson had supposed, for the British admiral had been convinced that Villeneuve was making for the Mediterranean. On receipt of this news Barham, who had just succeeded Melville as First Lord of the Admiralty, acted with admirable decision. Orders were issued to the squadrons before Rochefort and Ferrol to unite and prevent the French from entering the former port. The English under Calder met Ville-

¹¹ Thus on April 2 he wrote to Decrès: "See that the Dutch sheets publish the news that a French fleet has landed 10,000 men in Egypt." *Corr.*, X, no. 8617.

¹² *Ibid.*, X, no. 8700.

neuve 150 miles west of the Spanish coast, but could not prevent his gaining port with his forces virtually intact.

On the eighteenth Nelson arrived at Gibraltar and was aghast to find that no French ships had passed through the straits. Finally satisfied that Villeneuve had not doubled back to the Antilles, he set sail for the Channel, where the fleets of Calder and Cornwallis, the blockading squadron before Brest, were already concentrated. With forty ships of the line they could have annihilated Villeneuve's fleet, but Napoleon had maneuvered so skillfully that it had never occurred to them that he might seek to cover his passage with such extended operations. To convince the British that the whole descent question was not being considered at the time, he had remained in Italy up to the last moment. On May 30 he had tried to calm the greatly alarmed Decrès:

Why are you so anxious that I should return to Paris? Nothing is better adapted to conceal my plans and deceive the enemy than my absence, who, thus being convinced that I will be occupied during July and August, will gain new confidence and allow a few more ships to get away to distant seas.¹³

Napoleon was to be disappointed in his hope that the British government, fearing the loss of various colonial possessions, would dispatch its fleets in all directions to guard the threatened points. The principle of interior lines, in terms of which Mahan so aptly described the strategy of the British admiralty during these years, was not renounced for a moment. But in his endeavor to continue his opponents in their feeling of security the Emperor of the French was successful. How completely his tactics deceived the British admirals is demonstrated by the fact that they separated almost as soon as they had come together. Nelson returned to England with four ships, Calder sailed south with seventeen to watch Villeneuve, and Cornwallis remained with eighteen before Brest. With this division the fate of Europe was placed in the balance — if Villeneuve should continue to

¹³ *Corr.*, X, no. 8813.

sail northward he might meet and overcome the individually inferior fleets in turn and sweep into the Channel without any force remaining to oppose him.

At Paris the greatest uncertainty existed as to the movements of Villeneuve's fleet. The French ministry of marine was obliged to work at a serious disadvantage, for it was forced to rely upon the British newspapers for most of its information. Thus on July 11, when the British government had already taken measures to prevent the returning fleet from reaching Europe, Decrès was complaining that he had only the British journals of June 25, which gave him no further information than that both Villeneuve and Nelson had arrived in the West Indies.¹⁴ The minister was a constitutional pessimist, and his lack of faith in the invasion scheme was a continual drawback in the actual operations to that end. His letters to the Emperor constantly estimate the various combinations of the British fleets which might be turned against Villeneuve, and the chances of gaining a momentary superiority in the Channel are never rated very high.¹⁵

On July 16 it was finally known in Paris that Villeneuve had left Martinique. New instructions were immediately prepared and sent to Ferrol. After his junction with the ships in that port, the admiral was to maneuver in such a fashion as to gain control of the Channel for at least four or five days. He had the choice of accomplishing this by any of the following operations: (1) the union with the squadrons of Brest and Rochefort; (2) the union with the squadron of Brest alone; (3) the union with the squadron of Rochefort and then, after having doubled Ireland and Scotland, with the Dutch ships in the Texel. If as a result of a battle, the necessity of extensive repairs, or any other unforeseen event, the situation should be changed considerably, Villeneuve was not to return to Ferrol but proceed instead to Cadiz.¹⁶

The state of mind in which Villeneuve returned to Europe

¹⁴ To the Emperor. A.N., AF IV, 1196.

¹⁵ Decrès to Napoleon, July 5, 1805. *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Instructions of July 16. *Ibid.*

was not calculated to increase his enthusiasm for the project now confided to his care. The admiral, though an excellent sailor, was a man of chronic indecision; responsibility rested heavily upon his shoulders. He shared Decrès' contempt for the Spanish marine,¹⁷ and his confidence in his own ships and men was not very great. He already dreaded the anger of the Emperor, whose representative, Lauriston, had expressed his disapproval of more than one of his decisions. Decrès, as Lauriston complainingly wrote to Napoleon, had made the big mistake of advising caution to a man who needed to be thrust ahead.¹⁸

On August 10 the combined fleets set sail from Ferrol and headed north. It is difficult to say whether Villeneuve had made up his mind to turn about before weighing anchor. Lauriston later accused the admiral of informing him about two hours after the fleet had got under way: "We are definitely going to Cadiz; I have so notified the minister."¹⁹ The same officer compared the navigation of the allied squadrons to that of a merchant fleet in terror of being attacked. Whether or not Villeneuve had made up his mind before leaving Ferrol and only sailed north to satisfy the letter of his orders, it is certain that he turned about on very little provocation. When on August 15 he sighted a squadron of five ships, he did not even wait to ascertain their character, but turned southward and put into Cadiz. The irony of this miserable issue of operations based on such magnificent conceptions lies in the fact that the very ships which frightened Villeneuve into flight were the Rochefort squadron of Captain Allemand, an addition to his forces which would have made them irresistible against any one of the British fleets.

Meanwhile, Napoleon had been waiting impatiently at Boulogne, where, in accordance with his desire not to attract British attention to the Channel, he had not appeared until August 3. On August 8 complete instructions concerning the

¹⁷ In speaking of the Rochefort squadron of Allemand, who had succeeded Missiessy, Decrès exclaimed: "J'aime mieux, en honneur, ces cinq vaisseaux là, que dix espagnols." To Napoleon, July 6, 1805. *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Aug. 10, 1805. *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Lauriston to Napoleon (Cadiz), 3 fructidor an XIII (Aug. 21, 1805). *Ibid.*

process of embarkation were issued.²⁰ The army had been magnificently trained in this regard. In a test carried out the previous month Ney's entire corps, horses and all, had been embarked at Étapes in forty-nine minutes.²¹ The Emperor was in a feverish state of mind, and his anxiety had been immeasurably increased by Decrès, who had by this time completely lost his head. The minister of marine had apparently hoped to the last that the attempt to invade England would be given up before it approached a climax. In repeated letters to the Emperor he had pleaded for the renunciation of the project even before Villeneuve had left Ferrol. With Allemand's ships at sea and no possible certainty of their encountering Villeneuve, he was sure that the French marine would find its grave in the Channel.²² But Napoleon was inexorable. On August 22 he even telegraphed Ganteaume to take command of the combined fleets if Villeneuve should arrive at Brest — under no circumstances was the latter to cast anchor.²³ Decrès was simultaneously advised: "If Villeneuve has gone to Cadiz, it is my intention that he proceed to the Channel after having added to his fleet the six vessels in that port and taken on provisions for two months."²⁴ It would seem that even with the half of the Continent about to move against him Napoleon could not bring himself to renounce the great project which had raised so high his hopes and cost him so many sacrifices.

With the receipt of this announcement, the minister of marine lost the remnants of his self-possession. To forbid Villeneuve to enter Brest, he declared despairingly, might result in the loss of the fleet. He had begged the Emperor "on his knees" not to associate the Spaniards with his naval enterprises, and now His Majesty wanted to add the squadrons of Cadiz and Carthagina

²⁰ Ordre impériale. E. Picard and L. Tuetey, eds., *Correspondance inédite de Napoléon Ier conservée aux Archives de la Guerre* (1912), I, no. 149.

²¹ Report of General Courand to Admiral Lacrosse, July 5, 1805. A.N., AF IV, 1196.

²² Decrès to Napoleon, undated. *Ibid.*

²³ *Corr.*, XI, no. 9113.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, XI, no. 9114.

to his fleet. If Villeneuve had gone to Cadiz it ought to be considered as an act of destiny, which saved his fleet for future use. If the admiral were forced to leave Cadiz for the Channel the consequences would be disastrous for the French navy.²⁵

His minister's pessimism may finally have aroused the doubts of the Emperor, which were increased by news from Ferrol that seemed to indicate that Villeneuve had taken a route which might have led as much to the south as to the north. On the twenty-third Napoleon still entertained some hope, writing to Talleyrand: "If my fleet follows instructions, joins that of Brest, and enters the Channel, there is still time: I am master of England."²⁶ On the morrow he made his decision — one so sudden and intuitive that much doubt has been expressed upon its spontaneity. No time was wasted on lamentations, orders being issued immediately for the Grand Army to be set in motion towards Germany.²⁷ The war of the Third Coalition had begun the moment the invasion project was relegated to the background.

What was Napoleon's reaction to the failure of the great project which had approached so near to realization? That the Emperor should have been glad about his admiral's return to port, as Fournier, for example, would have us believe, is hardly reasonable. If he felt relieved, it was the emotion of a man who had been under a ghastly nervous strain and had finally discovered how matters stood. He had been forced to remain inactive while circumstances beyond his direct control were deciding the fate of his enterprises. Now he could commence a new thread in the pattern of his destiny.

If one studies the correspondence of the previous two months one cannot but appreciate how tremendously he was in earnest. Why should these numberless questions, orders, prayers, and exhortations to his admirals have been only a jumble of words? The letters to Decrès, Ganteaume, Villeneuve, and Talleyrand

²⁵ Aug. 22, 1805. A.N., AF IV, 1196.

²⁶ *Corr.*, XI, no. 9117.

²⁷ To Berthier, Aug. 24, 1805. *Ibid.*, XI, no. 9128.

were certainly not intended for the *Moniteur*. Fournier's contention, that the embarkation was only a pretext so that the French manifestoes could declare that the Emperor had been hindered in his great undertaking against England and was thus compelled to carry the war into Germany, does not hold water. For months there had been sufficient excuse for going to war with Austria without appearing to be the aggressor; why wait until that power had developed its maximum strength for resistance if not for attack? Was Villeneuve's dash for the Channel to be merely a pleasure trip? It seems impossible to find any rational explanation for the whole Napoleonic policy during the year 1805 except that the descent was actually intended to take place in those trying days of August; and when one analyzes the Napoleonic diplomacy of the period, one is impressed at every step with how closely it was related to the invasion project. Thus Talleyrand received direct reports on the state of the naval operations.²⁸ It is very probable that he had his exact orders on what was to be done if Villeneuve's fleet entered the Channel; the Prussian plan of guarantee, for example, might have been immediately accepted.

Some writers have expressed the conviction that Napoleon's anger at the conduct of Villeneuve was largely simulated, that as the instructions of July 16 gave the admiral the alternative of returning to Cadiz if the situation were materially altered, the Emperor must from the first have held in view the probability of this choice being made by the irresolute commander. That this was not the case is proved beyond question by the fact that both the Emperor and Decrès had forgotten this feature of Villeneuve's instructions, and that the minister discovered it only in going through his papers on August 23. He immediately called his master's attention to this fact:

There is an important point which I have just remembered and which I must recall to your Majesty. It is that in going to Cadiz he

²⁸ Thus the reports of Ailhaud, commissioner for commercial relations (consul) at Coruna, were during this period addressed directly to the minister of the exterior. Reports of Aug. 10, 13, 14. A.N., AF IV, 1196.

[Villeneuve] bases himself on the instructions which Your Majesty gave him the 27 messidor [July 16]. Your Majesty ordered me to write to him at the same time that if he were obliged to go to Cadiz, he was to dispatch the divisions of Allemand and Gourdon on cruises.²⁹

Yet Napoleon did not consider, or appear to consider, the conduct of his admiral any more justified on this account. Villeneuve was and remained a convenient scapegoat. His conduct had indeed been of a kind to merit strong condemnation, and even his friend, Decrès, found it difficult to defend him, though protesting that it was the case of a "tête perdu" and not of cowardice.³⁰ The fact that the admiral had turned back at a time when the British forces were again divided was fatal to his reputation, for it was plain to everyone that the chance of a lifetime had been passed by. The Emperor's resentment turned partly against Decrès, whom he suspected, on the evidence of Lauriston, of having concealed the knowledge of the admiral's intention of going to Cadiz. The positiveness with which the minister had always asserted his "conviction" of this fact gave color to such an assumption, and Napoleon quite openly accused Decrès of having deceived him.³¹ But Decrès loudly protested his innocence, citing numerous dispatches from Villeneuve as evidence;³² and with this the Emperor was forced to content himself.

There has been some doubt expressed on the wisdom of Napoleon's naval policy during the year 1805. If the Emperor, say these critics, had adopted the English principle of the destruction of the enemy fleet, if his genius for combination had exerted itself to catch the British squadrons at a disadvantage instead of trying to evade them, the result of the maritime campaigns of that year might have been entirely different.

If Napoleon [declares Édouard Desbrière] lost the empire of the sea, one can say that he never sought it, and, which must surprise us,

²⁹ A.N., AF IV, 1196.

³⁰ Decrès to the Emperor, Sept. 6, 1805. *Ibid.*

³¹ *Corr.*, XI, no. 9185.

³² Sept. 9, 1805. A.N., AF IV, 1196.

that he applied to maritime war principles entirely opposed to those which he constantly put in practice in war upon land.³³

One is forced to agree with this contention, for in the year 1805 the naval operations were no more than a means to an end, which was only indirectly connected with maritime supremacy. Napoleon, in so many respects the admirer and disciple of Raynal, may have taken to heart the master's dictum:

The domination of the Continent may depend entirely on the talent of a single individual; it can pass away in a moment. Seapower, however, based on the active interest of all the subjects of a state, tends to grow continually, especially when encouraged by a national constitution; it can only be brought to an end by an invasion.³⁴

Herein may lie the explanation of the Corsican's lack of faith in any single naval victory and his persistence in the project of descent. Even after the war upon the Continent had been decided on, it was not given up, and if Villeneuve's fleet had not found its grave at Trafalgar, it is possible that the following year would have seen a renewal of the plan. The flotilla was left in excellent order at Boulogne, the details being minutely set down in an imperial decree of August 27.³⁵ Thirty thousand men under Marshal Brune remained to guard the "iron coast," which might have become the permanent headquarters of the Grand Army after its campaign in Germany.

Did Napoleon change his principles on naval operations after the failure of his plans? The instructions given Vice-Admiral Rosily, whom he dispatched to replace Villeneuve, would seem to indicate this. "Our intention," wrote the Emperor on the seventeenth of September, "is that wherever you find the enemy with inferior forces, you will attack him without hesitation and have a decisive affair with him."³⁶ But after Trafalgar operation in fleets was no longer possible, and the French definitely gave up any idea of controlling even part of the seas for a limited

³³ Desbrière, *La campagne maritime de 1805* (1905), p. 226.

³⁴ Bitterauf, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Bonapartismus* (1915), p. 14.

³⁵ A.N., AF IV, 1196.

³⁶ *Corr.*, XI, no. 9230.

time. Even before the great disaster Decrès had urged that the fleets be divided up into little cruising squadrons, striving for tactical advantages, harassing commerce, and here and there engaging in a running fight. "That would be war after my own heart," writes the minister.³⁷ From the top to the bottom the French marine was pervaded with the same idea of avoiding decisive contact with the enemy, and the loss of the principal fleet in the one considerable naval encounter of the history of the Empire did not tend to discredit such views.

The significance of Trafalgar for Napoleon's future policy on the Continent can scarcely be overemphasized. England now being secure from direct attack, he was forced to use more ruthless weapons and to strike the innocent to reach the guilty. Far from prevailing upon him to renounce the struggle with the island kingdom, the naval catastrophe steeled his determination to bring it to its knees by other means. War upon the Continent, up to August 1805 only an alternative, henceforth became a necessity.

³⁷ To Napoleon, Aug. 23, 1805. A.N., AF IV, 1196.

CHAPTER XIX

THE DIPLOMATIC CONQUEST OF SOUTH GERMANY

THAT Napoleon had come to consider Germany the most favorable battlefield in the "next war" had been demonstrated by the measures taken in the fall of 1804. In that country the campaigns of the French had always been facilitated or rendered arduous according to the relation in which they stood to Bavaria. To gain the alliance of the court of Munich was equivalent to a great victory, for in addition to the increase in military strength, the point of contact with the Austrians was changed at one stroke from the Rhine to the Inn. The chances of crushing them in the north before it came to a decisive encounter in Italy were proportionately advanced.

The circumstances at the opening of the year 1805 were in many ways favorable to an alliance between France and Bavaria. In 1803 the court of Munich had drawn somewhat away from France and shown a marked predilection for a connection with Prussia. But the events of the following year had again demonstrated that Frederick William would not face serious risks in protecting his clients, while France had turned back to the Continent and had called a halt to the menaces of the court of Vienna. On more than one occasion the Elector and Montgelas had been profuse in their expressions of gratitude, and the latter had frequently hinted to Otto that the time would soon be ripe to drive Austria from Swabia. In January, 1805, when war with Austria seemed probable, Talleyrand had sounded Cetto on the course which his master would pursue. The Bavarian envoy replied that as far as he knew the political system of Maximilian Joseph, he was sure it would lead him to the side of Napoleon if he were ever forced to make a choice. An even stronger assurance was given Otto by Montgelas, who declared that the Elector would not hesitate a moment if it came to a de-

cision. When Marshal Brune passed through Munich in March, he was requested by Maximilian Joseph to inform Napoleon that if Austria ever forced war upon France, 30,000 Bavarians would join 80,000 Frenchmen in a march on Vienna.¹ But the court of Munich was by no means inclined to move without being assured of a considerable share of the spoil. That its views were not modest in this respect was made clear by the instructions drawn up personally by the Elector for Cetto on February 15. If Bavaria should ever join France against Austria, she would feel justified in expecting a subsidy for her troops, a promise of compensation for all losses incurred, and, in case of the war's being successful, Tyrol, all the Austrian possessions in Swabia, and the Innviertel.²

The more than favorable reception of the French overtures at Munich persuaded Napoleon and Talleyrand that the idea of a formal alliance with France was already being entertained by the Elector, who was held back only by his habitual hesitation and timidity. Otto was therefore instructed to ascertain the intentions of the prince and his ministers, and, in case of indecision, represent the desirability of an alliance, but in no case was he to enter into negotiations until he felt absolutely certain of success, and then only if assured of the greatest secrecy.³ About the same time a proposal was made to Maximilian Joseph of an exchange of orders, he being the only one of the electoral princes so honored. But the road was not so easy as had been anticipated. In spite of the animosity of the Elector and Montgelas toward Austria, who had done so much to humiliate them in the previous year, they so greatly dreaded the consequences of a disastrous war that they actually hoped for an alliance between the governments of Paris and Vienna. This they considered the only guarantee of the tranquillity of the Continent. Austria had of late evidenced a spirit

¹ Otto to Talleyrand, 3 pluviôse and 13 ventôse an XIII (Jan. 23 and March 4, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, nos. 11, 41.

² R. Ledermann, *Der Anschluss Bayerns an Frankreich im Jahre 1805* (1901), p. 5.

³ 21 ventôse an XIII (March 12, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 46.

entirely at variance with that of the previous year. She withdrew from her advanced position on the question of recruiting in Swabia, made her minister at Munich a count, and continued her overtures for a marriage between the Archduke Palatine of Hungary and the Princess Augusta. This rare complacency inclined the Elector to the opinion that he had been mistaken after all in concluding that it would be impossible to remain neutral in case of a war between France and Austria. When Otto hinted at the possibility of an alliance to Montgelas, the minister now told him that his master was completely devoted to the idea of the neutrality of South Germany, that the only possibility of a connection with France lay in a defensive alliance if Austria should dare to violate it.⁴

The astute diplomacy of Otto soon converted Montgelas to the idea of a more intimate union. The French minister was known to be the chief advocate of the renewal of the traditional alliance between his country and Bavaria, and it seemed natural enough that he should promote it on his own account. His efforts were facilitated by the publication of a new conclusion of the Aulic Council intended to execute the Conservatorium of January 23, 1804. At Munich the ministers wondered whether this was merely the taking up of the thread of procedure or whether the cabinet of Vienna had some new political end in view. Otto insinuated that this act was the product of Russian inspiration to aggravate the discord in Germany and enable the Tsar to interfere as mediator. If Austria should seize this chance to despoil the Elector of a large part of his dominions, he would be entirely isolated. "M. de Montgelas, struck by these observations, has finally pronounced the word 'alliance,'" reported the exultant envoy. But when Otto spoke of a union based on a guarantee of the Kingdom of Italy, the minister responded with "neutrality" and "concert with Prussia." To the Frenchman's observation that the Elector ought to play a great rôle in Germany, Montgelas retorted: "I cannot

⁴ Otto to Talleyrand, 6 pluviôse, 9 and 30 ventôse an XII (Jan. 26, Feb. 28, and March 22, 1805). *A.E., BAVIÈRE*, 181, nos. 13, 39, 49.

hope to make a hero of a prince who has not the necessary disposition." Yet Otto came away from the interview convinced that there was every chance of gaining the alliance of Bavaria if the *casus foederis* were made to apply to Napoleon's dominions in general instead of to the Kingdom of Italy.⁵

The negotiations were protracted from April until June, the Bavarians showing the most extreme reluctance to make an arrangement on the basis of the various projects submitted by the French. Napoleon naturally was anxious to secure the support of Maximilian Joseph in case of a war over Italy, while the shrinking Elector insisted on basing the alliance on German affairs alone. Talleyrand pointed out that as there was no longer the least likelihood of a "Reichskrieg," the entire burden of such an arrangement would fall on France. Even if there were no war the court of Munich would gain considerably by the French project, for its interests would henceforth be protected by the most powerful state in Europe. The guarantee of the situation in Italy was certainly not too much to ask for an association which offered Bavaria every chance of enlargement in case of war and the defense of her interests in time of peace.⁶ On the same day that this dispatch to Otto was drawn up, Napoleon, then at Milan, said to Cetto:

As King of Italy I will always be to the Elector of Bavaria what I have been to him as Emperor of the French. Assure his Serene Highness in the first letter you send to Munich, that in earnest of the interest and friendship which bind me to him I will do everything that may be agreeable to him. I will defend his House everywhere, and on every occasion that presents itself I will secure it all possible advantages.⁷

Such words from the most powerful monarch of Europe and the arguments of Talleyrand did not fail in their effect at Munich. The final influence in bringing Montgelas to a decision were the reports of the Bavarian minister at Vienna,

⁵ Otto to Talleyrand, 22 germinal an XIII (April 12, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 61.

⁶ 7 prairial an XIII (May 27, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 85.

⁷ From Cetto's report of May 28. Ledermann, *Der Anschluss Bayerns*, p. 20.

Gravenreuth, who saw matters much more clearly than La Rochefoucauld and declared that war was all but inevitable: "In case this misfortune is unavoidable, I must again impress upon Your Highness that the occupation of Bavaria will be one of the first developments," wrote the astute envoy on May 15. And two days later: "As a man of honor and devotion I cannot hide from my Prince that he must of necessity take one side or the other of the warring powers if he does not wish to sign the death warrant of his state."⁸ Montgelas was convinced. In the last two weeks of May, Otto had maintained a cold front—it was to be feared that France would turn to open enmity if, after having gone so far, Bavaria now drew back. Napoleon could always make his bargain with Austria and safeguard himself from attack upon the Continent by sacrificing Bavaria to her.

Montgelas laid siege to the Elector in his palace of Nymphenburg. He set out the impossibility of preserving neutrality, which could be maintained against Austria only by the effective intervention of Prussia and Russia. Neither of these would be likely to do anything. All that Bavaria had suffered at the hands of the Hofburg since the Peace of Luneville was reviewed by the eloquent minister. The wavering prince was finally brought to a decision. On June 9 Montgelas informed Otto that Maximilian Joseph had agreed in principle to the French project.⁹

The negotiations now commenced on the exact terms of the alliance. Bavaria had consented to the guarantee of Italy; thus the main point upon which Napoleon had insisted was gained. But difficulties concerning details delayed the final accord. The Emperor himself was by now too much interested in procuring the speedy conclusion of the alliance to be exacting, for it would help to secure his rear against an attack while engaged in the descent upon England. But the more urgently Otto pressed for a quick agreement, the more did Montgelas

⁸ Ledermann, *Der Anschluss Bayerns*, p. 20.

⁹ Otto to Talleyrand, 20 prairial an XIII (June 9, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 94.

bring forward new demands. France should make a formal promise of her support in the questions of the immediate nobility, the *droit d'épaves*, and the disputes with Austria in Swabia. She should provide the Elector with a subsidy and pay his troops if they were driven from Bavarian territory. To the last of these demands Napoleon readily agreed, but he refused to lend himself to a general endorsement of the interminable pretensions of the court of Munich. When the minister had finally been satisfied, the Elector in turn began to draw back. It was fortunate for Napoleon that the Hofburg did not make any kind of overture to Bavaria in these critical days, when the Elector might still have leaned to the power from whom she had most to fear instead of to the one who had most to give. Otto was so disturbed that he requested La Rochefoucauld to give him all possible information on the state of affairs at Vienna. The only reply he received was that the ambassador would find it a pleasure to notify him, ". . . when the two [imperial] courts were in accord on all points."¹⁰

On July 31 Otto finally dispatched the completed project of the treaty of alliance to Paris, adding in a postscript that he considered it the limit of what could be obtained. While Napoleon was not entirely satisfied, he was so anxious to settle everything that he gave his approval. Otto was instructed to get it signed and sent to Boulogne posthaste, stipulating the shortest possible delay for the exchange of ratifications. He was then to communicate to Montgelas Talleyrand's ultimatum of August 15 and to say that the Emperor would break camp and be in Bavaria with 200,000 men if Austria did not cease to arm. It was hoped to quiet the fears of the Elector by this assurance. That prince needed every bit of encouragement which could possibly be afforded him. Thus, when a false report reached Munich that the French had embarked at Boulogne, Maximilian Joseph was thrown into such a panic that he personally sought out Otto in the latter's box in the

¹⁰ Correspondence of Otto and Talleyrand; projects of treaties, 10 messidor to 16 thermidor an XIII (June 29 to Aug. 4, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, nos. 106-138.

theatre. To the horrified minister he appeared on the point of throwing over the alliance. The next morning Montgelas' manner clearly showed how the cabinet of Munich had again fallen into hesitation; he said that he had not yet received the authority to sign the treaty. Otto considered it necessary to assure him that the Emperor would certainly not undertake anything against England until he had obtained material proof of the neutrality of Austria.¹¹

"The doubts with which a few vague expressions of M. de Montgelas had inspired me," wrote Otto to Talleyrand on August 25, "have been fully confirmed this morning. The Elector was on the point of breaking off the negotiation." At 11 A.M. the French envoy had been bidden to Montgelas' country house, where, to his surprise, he was met by Maximilian Joseph in person, who asked him to listen patiently until he had finished reading a long memorandum which he had himself drawn up. In this were recapitulated all the objections to a French alliance which Otto had been forced to listen to during the previous two months. The minister was so outraged that he adopted a tone of undisguised brutality. Twenty-thousand Bavarians, he said, added little to 200,000 Frenchmen; the Emperor had only demanded this auxiliary corps in order to have a gauge of the dispositions of the Elector and to motivate to the French people the advantages which he was ready to grant to the Palatine House: in fine, it was necessary to be sure that the Bavarians would not end by turning Austrian. After much urging the embarrassed prince admitted that his change of front was the result of a report from Berlin to the effect that Prussia was about to declare against France as a result of Napoleon's threats to Hesse-Cassel (in connection with the residence of the British minister, Taylor).

In the name of God [cried the harassed Elector] do not fight the whole world. I have every confidence in the genius and the power of the Emperor Napoleon, but all human forces have their limits. Let it

¹¹ Talleyrand to Otto, 29 thermidor; Otto to Talleyrand, 5 and 6 fructidor (Aug. 17, 24, and 25, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, nos. 147, 148, 150.

suffice you to fight the Austrians and the Russians; but if you become embroiled with the North of Germany, you will not be able to resist so many enemies at one time.

Otto finally succeeded in quieting Maximilian Joseph's worst fears and secured his promise to sign the treaty, but he begged Talleyrand to give him complete information in respect to the relations with Prussia, so that he might calm the apprehensions of the Bavarians. On the morrow of this stormy conference the treaty was finally signed and delivered to the French envoy.¹² But there was still to be more than one moment of anxiety and doubt before the troops of Bavaria were joined to those of France.

The cord which was to bind the other South German states to France was less thoroughly prepared. It would indeed have been a precarious matter to have carried on lengthy negotiations with several courts. Not until August 17 did Talleyrand issue instructions for the French ministers to Württemberg, Baden, and the Archchancellor. The existing relations between France and Austria were explained, and the statement made that in case of war the Emperor would seek the enemy in the heart of his dominions, thus necessitating the crossing of the Rhine and the passage through Germany. Under these circumstances it would be necessary to know the sentiments of the princes to whom they were accredited. Undoubtedly they would prefer neutrality, but in a war between France and Austria any hope of neutrality for the states which lay between was a chimera. It would therefore be necessary for them to choose sides, and wisdom could only point in one direction. France was not only the probable victor, but was also the state which could and would do the most for them. Her boundary being forever fixed by the Rhine, the fruits of her victory would go to swell the territories of her allies.¹³

¹² Otto to Talleyrand, 7 fructidor an XIII (Aug. 25, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 157.

¹³ A.E., AUTRICHE, 377, no. 168; the dispatches to Didelot and Hédouville are in WÜRTTEMBERG, 41, no. 59.

When Didelot made the first overtures on this basis to the Württemberg minister, Wintzingerode, the latter manifested much surprise. It was evident that the court of Stuttgart had counted upon remaining neutral. After much discussion between the two diplomats, Wintzingerode promised to advise the Council of Napoleon's propositions, but because two of the members (Norman and Andeslau) were absent, it would be necessary to delay his reply for forty-eight hours.¹⁴ Norman was at that moment in Munich, where he was suggesting a concert of the two electoral courts for the preservation of their neutrality. Montgelas told him nothing of Bavaria's connection with France, but he urged the Württemberger to speak to his master of the necessity of common measures to maintain their neutrality against *Austria*.¹⁵ Frederick had also applied at Berlin to be included in the line of demarcation which he expected the Prussians to draw. No reply had as yet been received when Didelot presented what amounted almost to an ultimatum. Under the vigorous pressure of the French envoy the Elector finally yielded, agreeing to make common cause with France if war should break out. On the same day (August 30) Didelot left for Carlsruhe, where, in the absence of Massias, he was to conduct the negotiations for the alliance of Charles Frederick.

The adhesion of Baden to the cause of France in the war of the Third Coalition is associated with Napoleon's pursuit of family alliances with the South German princes. In spite of his previous failure to gain the hand of Princess Augusta of Bavaria for Prince Eugene, the Emperor had by no means given up the idea. The negotiations between Bavaria and Baden progressed slowly, but in July Napoleon received information from both Munich and Carlsruhe which convinced him that it would be necessary to act if his plans were not to miscarry. After the acceptance of the French alliance project by Bavaria,

¹⁴ Didelot to Talleyrand, 10 fructidor an XIII (Aug. 28, 1805). A.E., WÜRTTEMBERG, 41, no. 67.

¹⁵ Otto to Talleyrand, 7 fructidor an XIII (Aug. 25, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 151.

Otto had spoken to Montgelas of the desirability of sealing the pact by a family connection. The minister could give him little information on the state of the negotiations with Baden, for they were conducted by the Elector personally. On being pressed by Montgelas, Maximilian Joseph spoke of everything's being settled and authorized him to say as much to the Austrian minister, who was at that time renewing his solicitations in favor of the Archduke Palatine.¹⁶ Almost simultaneously with Otto's dispatch one arrived from Massias. The envoy at Carlsruhe claimed to have seen a letter from the Elector of Bavaria to the Margravine (mother of the Electoral Prince), which urged her to plead with Charles Frederick to declare himself publicly on the marriage and enter into the final arrangements. But the ruler of Baden was still trying to delay matters in the hope of finding a way out of the dilemma of offending either France or Bavaria, while the Francophile Prince Louis was encouraging his nephew in dissipation in order to give him a distaste for marriage.¹⁷

On receiving the unpleasant news of the progress of the negotiations between Munich and Carlsruhe, Napoleon decided to send his chamberlain, Thiard, on a mission which was intended to bring the matter to a conclusion favorable to France. His instructions gave him a complete outline of the whole question. Up to then, said Talleyrand, by whom they were drawn up, the two Electors had maintained that they would be glad to rid themselves of their obligations, but that neither of them could take the first step. The most simple way to end the matter was to get some kind of statement of renunciation from Charles Frederick, which was then to be presented at Munich. Thiard was to work through Prince Louis and Madame Hochberg. The importance which Napoleon ascribed to this mission can be deduced from the date of these instructions, July 23, a period when the orders for Villeneuve's advance on the Chan-

¹⁶ 10 messidor an XIII (June 29, 1805). A E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 105.

¹⁷ Massias to Talleyrand, 1 messidor an XIII (June 20, 1805). A.E., BADE, supplément 1, fol. 300-302.

nel had already been given.¹⁸ That Napoleon did not expect a war on the Continent in the following month acquires additional proof from the fact that Thiard's mission did not as yet have any additional political significance, and the slowness with which the envoy was to travel hardly indicated apprehension of an approaching crisis.

On arriving at Carlsruhe, Thiard immediately entered into communication with Prince Louis, who informed him of even more recent steps of Maximilian Joseph to bring the marriage arrangements to their conclusion. Numerous conferences took place between Thiard, Prince Louis, and Dalberg, the minister of Baden to Paris. After much discussion, Thiard was able to extract a written statement from the Elector, countersigned by Prince Louis and Dalberg, in which the Bavarian sovereign was notified that Baden was willing to renounce the family alliance if Prince Eugene were preferred as a son-in-law. With this declaration the chamberlain proceeded to Munich, but he was almost immediately ordered back to Carlsruhe by Talleyrand, who desired him to assist Didelot in persuading the Badeners to a speedy alliance. On September 5, Charles Frederick reluctantly gave his consent to a treaty which was to bind the fortunes of his house to those of France for many years to come.¹⁹

Only the arrival of the French troops induced Frederick of Württemberg to agree to a definite alliance with Napoleon, but with Bavaria and the line of the Inn once gained to France, the adhesion of the other states had really become inevitable. It was toward this end that Napoleon had directed his diplomacy throughout the year 1805 — with the alliance of Bavaria the foundation of hegemony in Germany had been laid.

¹⁸ The instructions were written out by Talleyrand himself, a rare procedure which occurred only when the matter involved was of great importance. A.E., BADE, supplément 1, fol. 304-309.

¹⁹ Thiard to Talleyrand, Aug. 22 and 26, Sept. 2; Thiard to the government of Baden, Sept. 3 and 5. A.E., BADE, supplément 1, fol. 312-322; Talleyrand to Thiard, Aug. 27. A.E., BADE, 6, no. 324; Didelot to Talleyrand, 10 and 15 fructidor an XIII (Aug. 28 and Sept. 2, 1805). A.E., WÜRTEMBERG, 41, no. 67.

PART V
WAR AND DIPLOMACY — THE CAMPAIGN
OF 1805

CHAPTER XX

NAPOLEONIC POLICY DURING THE ULM CAMPAIGN

BY DELAYING at Boulogne until certain that his fleet had turned back, Napoleon had put himself at some disadvantage. The Austrians were given time to invade South Germany, and it seemed as if their junction with the Russians before the arrival of the French could no longer be prevented. But the Emperor was able to turn this situation to his own profit. By allowing the Austrians to proceed and by remaining at Boulogne up to the last moment, he instilled in them a feeling of security which would otherwise have been absent. On the seventh of September they crossed the Inn with the undisguised intention of forcing the Bavarians to join them. The army, composed of 80,000 men, was commanded by General Mack, whose abilities as a strategist and tactician in no way approximated his undoubted skill as an organizer. The first attack was apparently expected from Italy, and it was there that Archduke Charles was stationed with 120,000 men. With Napoleon, however, the doing of the unexpected had become a guiding principle, and his decision to make Germany the scene of his next war with Austria had long been a fixed one. While the Grand Army was being set in motion, Bertrand was dispatched to reconnoiter the routes and river systems of Bavaria, and Savary those of the valley of the Lower Danube and Neckar.¹ The former officer was also to act as adviser to the Bavarian government in regard to its military measures. Every factor was taken into consideration in the great plan of entrapping the Austrian army, which Napoleon was sure would enter South Germany. On August 26 Marmont was ordered to leave Holland and march down the Rhine to Mainz, while Bernadotte was in-

¹ To Bertrand, Aug. 25; to Savary, Aug. 28. *Corr.*, XI, nos. 9133, 9154.

structed to assemble his troops at Göttingen.² The manner in which everything was arranged to conform with the political situation is demonstrated by the orders given the latter:

Your movements in the present state of public opinion will attract curiosity. You will therefore be careful to announce that you intend to winter in Hanover. In fact, after reviewing your troops at Göttingen, you will return to your capital. The Emperor cannot leave you in ignorance of the fact that negotiations are pending with Prussia . . . and that it is necessary to put that court on the wrong scent, so that it may not realize that the Emperor is planning to collect all his troops.³

Since July Napoleon had expected to remove Bernadotte's corps from Hanover, and his negotiations for an alliance with the court of Berlin were based on a Prussian occupation which would insure the electorate against an invasion by the allies after the French troops had been removed. Fournier and others who deny the sincerity of the plan of invading England deduce from this fact that the Emperor had from the first planned to throw the Boulogne army into Germany.⁴ But it is far more reasonable to suppose that Bernadotte was needed in South Germany or on the left bank of the Rhine to protect France against an Austrian invasion during the absence of the Grand Army in England. On August 22, when Napoleon still hopes that Villeneuve will appear in the Channel, he writes to Talleyrand that the wavering Elector of Bavaria should be offered the support of the army of Hanover and an additional corps of 20,000 men if Austria declared war.⁵ From this one may conclude that Bernadotte's corps was destined to combine with the Bavarians and the troops remaining in France as an army of observation against Austria while the descent project was being carried out. Now that the failure of the great enterprise

²To Berthier, Aug. 26. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9137.

³D. P. Barton, *Bernadotte and Napoleon* (1921), p. 101.

⁴Fournier, *Napoleon the First*, p. 299.

⁵*Corr.*, XI, no. 9104. There could be no more conclusive proof that Napoleon was still undecided. If his mind had been made up, would he not at this time have given the Elector the infinitely more reassuring information that the whole Grande Armée would soon be in South Germany?

had decided Napoleon in favor of war upon the Continent, the part played by the army of Hanover became an entirely different one. The projected retirement to France became a ruse to convince the enemy that Napoleon did not intend to remove the Grand Army from the coast. On September 9 La Rochefoucauld was informed that Bernadotte had received orders to bring his army to the department of the Haut-Rhin. The Emperor desired that the Austrians be informed *officially* of this decision, and a note was enclosed which the ambassador was to deliver to Cobenzl as soon as it was known in Vienna that the French were leaving Hanover: "It would be better that the note be delivered a day too late than a day too early."⁶ It is evident that the aim of Napoleon was to give his movements the appearance of having no strategic importance, being only intended to bring these troops in line with the general mobilization.

As far as Prussia was concerned, the Emperor was anxious to keep her in ignorance as long as possible in regard to the intended operations. In this he had more than one aim in view. His negotiations at Berlin hinged on the evacuation of Hanover in return for an alliance. If it were known to the Prussian statesmen that the French expected to depart from the Electorate in any event, the value of what Napoleon offered them with such a generous gesture would have lost greatly in their eyes. The fact that the Emperor seemed to anticipate a campaign in South Germany would also have given them pause, for the chief advantage for them in the projected alliance lay in the possibility of maintaining peace upon the Continent. Finally, it was necessary to act before the court of Berlin could interfere with the violation of North German territory, which would be necessary in the case of the Electorate of Hesse-Cassel.

The North German courts once assured that there would be no military developments in the near future, everything was ready for the coup that Napoleon had been meditating. Berna-

⁶ Talleyrand to La Rochefoucauld, 22 fructidor an XIII (Sept. 9, 1805). A.E., AUTRICHE, 377, no. 233.

dotte was informed that he should hold himself in readiness for a movement which would take him across Hessian territory to the Bavarian center of Würzburg; as soon as the final marching order should arrive, he was to announce to Elector William that he would require free passage through his territories in order to return to France. At the same time he was to begin his march without waiting for an answer. On September 5 the orders for the execution of this maneuver were actually issued.⁷ The Elector found himself at a serious disadvantage, for he did not have the time to ascertain whether Prussia and the other North German states would support him if he resisted. The only thing left for him to do was to grant the desired permission.

The movements of Bernadotte's corps, however, formed only a small part of the drawing together of the vast net whose folds were soon to enmesh Mack. The Bavarian troops had withdrawn to Würzburg before the advance of the Austrians. There they were soon joined by the corps of Marmont, which had marched east from Mainz. When Bernadotte arrived, a compact body of 60,000 men was arrayed under his orders. The corps of Ney, Lannes, Davout, Soult, Murat, and Augereau, which had composed the army at Boulogne, crossed the Rhine below Mainz. The Imperial Guard came through Strasbourg from Paris and Boulogne. Everything had been done with a speed and precision unprecedented in the annals of warfare. There had been so little noise and friction that most of France did not even know the camp at Boulogne had been broken up. The announcement that 30,000 men were being dispatched to the Rhine to observe the Austrians even found credence at Paris.

By the end of September every corps had found its place at the rendezvous and the Grand Army occupied a line from Würzburg to Strasbourg, facing east. Talleyrand, who certainly was not easily dazzled by military display, could well exult: "Never has Germany seen so many Frenchmen, nor

⁷ To Bernadotte. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9184

such fine and such numerous battalions!"⁸ On October 1 Napoleon made the army pirouette southwards and march straight for the Danube. Before continuing the development of the military situation, however, we must consider the political contest with Austria in South Germany.

When Maximilian Joseph of Bavaria had signed the treaty of alliance with France, he had done so only with a heavy heart. He had entered upon the project of a French connection with the idea that he would thereby secure the protection of Europe's most powerful sovereign: an offensive war upon Austria would never have entered into his views. The preparations of the Austrians upon the Bavarian border caused an indescribable panic at Munich. The Elector was urged by his ministers to retire into Franconia, a measure also urgently advocated by Otto. "I must avow, Monseigneur," wrote the latter to Talleyrand, "that if he remains here, I cannot see more than a feeble guarantee of our alliance." Every day the French envoy was now pressing for the Bavarian ratification of the pact, that of Napoleon having been sent express to Munich from Boulogne.⁹ Talleyrand advised that the Elector should be induced to simulate coldness toward Otto, while coquetting with the Austrians to convince them that everything might be gained by the easy path of negotiation. "At least this procedure will incline Austria to circumspection. The tardiness of her measures may gain a few days and that is all that is necessary."

These hopes were frustrated by the unanticipated decision of the Austrians. At Vienna the forcible occupation of Bavaria had long been decided upon, and it was confidently expected that the irresolute Elector would allow himself to be intimidated into joining the coalition. Nothing was known of the Bavarian treaty with France, Otto having conducted himself so prudently during the negotiations that he frequently absented himself from court for a fortnight at a time and was generally

⁸ Talleyrand to Otto, 15 fructidor an XIII (Sept. 2, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 164.

⁹ 15 fructidor an XIII (Sept. 2, 1805). *Ibid.*, 181, no. 161.

believed to be on indifferent terms with Maximilian Joseph.¹⁰

On September 6 Prince Schwarzenberg arrived at Munich with a letter from Emperor Francis, in which the adhesion of Bavaria to the coalition was requested. The envoy was not provided with any written authority for the demands which he made orally to the quaking Elector. The Bavarian army was to be incorporated with the Austrian for the duration of the war; all that was offered in return was the guarantee of the Elector's possessions, little more than a self-denying ordinance, for there was nothing which France would care to take away from Maximilian Joseph. The envoy was then sent to Montgelas, who received him coldly and demanded his "*pleins pouvoirs*," which the Austrian of course did not have. Seeing that nothing was to be done with the minister, Schwarzenberg hurried back to the Elector at Nymphenburg. The poor prince had already succumbed to his agitation; ill and weakened by fever, he wilted before the threats of his persecutor. Early the next morning Otto was aghast to receive a letter from the Elector, who implored his pardon, but said the welfare of his state required that he renounce his connection with France. Wild with indignation, the French minister hurried to Montgelas, who in the first moment of despair wished to hand in his resignation. From this he was dissuaded by Otto, and the two drew up a joint memorandum to be presented to the Elector by Gravenreuth, who had just arrived from Vienna and whose energy was of great assistance in persuading the wretched prince of the error of his ways.

As Maximilian Joseph had already promised Schwarzenberg to do everything that was asked of him, some way had to be found out of the dilemma. Montgelas hit upon a plan truly Machiavellian in its ingenious trickery. The Electoral Prince, who was at that time at Lausanne in Switzerland, was ordered to proceed into French territory immediately. A letter was then drawn up to Emperor Francis, in which Maximilian Joseph

¹⁰ Otto to Talleyrand, 26 fructidor an XIII (Sept. 13, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 173.

piteously begged for the privilege of remaining neutral, as his poor son would otherwise fall a prey to the wrath of Napoleon. This missive was entrusted for delivery to General Nogarola, the governor of Munich and a man well-known for his pro-Austrian sympathies. The appointment achieved the double purpose of removing a commander of doubtful loyalty from the capital and of deceiving the Austrians as to the nature of the missive he was to carry. Nogarola had no idea what the Elector's letter contained; he was entirely convinced that Bavaria was giving in completely to the demands of the Hofburg. Indeed, so elated was he at the prospect of a hearty welcome at Vienna, that he made it a point to stop at Mack's headquarters and inform the general that everything was settled in the Austrian interest.¹¹

In the meantime Montgelas was negotiating with Schwarzenberg, being careful to ask for nothing which was incompatible with the envoy's demands and suggesting only such minor changes as that Munich should be exempted from the Austrian passage. On the night of September 8 the Elector and his family left Munich for Würzburg, a procedure of such secrecy that not even the higher court functionaries were informed of it. To prevent Schwarzenberg from learning of the event before morning, two regiments of cavalry patrolled the streets of the city, even intercepting the couriers from the Austrian government to its envoy.¹² The consternation of Schwarzenberg was exceeded only by the fury of Mack, when they discovered how they had been duped. The advance of the latter upon Munich had been delayed by at least forty-eight hours, and the more exposed sections of the Bavarian army had had time to draw out of danger. At Vienna the indignation passed all bounds. There Nogarola had been received with the greatest distinction by Emperor Francis. But in the reading of the

¹¹ Most of the material for this account is taken from the very full and interesting reports of Otto of the 20, 22, and 25 fructidor an XIII (Sept. 7, 9, and 12, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, nos. 168, 169, 172.

¹² S. J. Combeau de Chary, *Souvenirs des guerres d'Allemagne pendant la Révolution et l'Empire* (1900), p. 199.

Elector's letter the usually so phlegmatic monarch lost his temper completely. "Either they have permitted themselves a bad joke with you," he roared at the startled Bavarian, "or it is you who wish to do this to me." And he dismissed the trembling envoy with the threat: "*Je ne pense pas prendre la Bavière, je veux la manger.*"¹³ But the news of the retirement to Würzburg gave the Austrians pause. It had become impossible to coerce Bavaria into the coalition; if she were not to be entirely forced into the French camp, it would be necessary to win her by conciliatory means. So Buol was ordered to follow the Elector to Würzburg, being empowered to make a series of concessions, which, it was hoped, would induce the pacific prince at least to agree to neutrality. That it was really not yet too late is demonstrated by the frantic appeals of Otto to the French commanders to hurry their march, as the actual presence of even a few French troops would decide the Bavarians for once and all.

The extreme pusillanimity of the Elector [he lamented to Talleyrand] is a source of daily anxiety to his faithful servitors. The only too recent scene with M. de Schwarzenberg has given the measure of his character, and if at this moment a new Austrian negotiator presented himself it would be so much more difficult to retain the prince in the bounds of his true policy, as the Electrice, more Austrian than ever, employs all possible means, and particularly tears, to make him hesitate.¹⁴

To gain a little extra time, Gravenreuth, who as usual showed the most decision among the Bavarians, sent his brother to Mack at Munich to recommence negotiations. He found the general extremely irritable, claiming that the order to cut off the Bavarian retreat had already been given, when a note arrived from Schwarzenberg stating that the Elector had sub-

¹³ Otto to Talleyrand, 4 complémentaire an XIII (Sept. 21, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 184. Paget states in a letter to Mulgrave of September 15 that the news of the flight to Würzburg arrived at Vienna before Nogarola (*Paget Papers*, II, 216), but Ledermann (*Der Anschluss Bayerns*, p. 66), who used the archives at Munich, gives somewhat the same account as that of Otto.

¹⁴ To Talleyrand, 1 complémentaire an XIII (Sept. 18, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 178.

mitted to everything. Gravenreuth offered successively the neutrality of Bavaria, then the drawing of a line of demarcation, finally the adhesion to the coalition as a separate corps. All three suggestions were haughtily refused by Mack, who taxed the Elector with perfidy and feebleness. The conduct of the Austrians military was indeed as impolitic as it could possibly have been. The Bavarians were forced to accept their depreciated paper money, which was worth only 48 per cent of its face value in Vienna. The provincial administrators were ignored, and the country was treated like conquered territory. The demand that the Elector's troops be incorporated in the Austrian army was particularly resented as an insult to his soldiers. "Never have the Bavarian people shown so much spirit and character," praised Otto, "I wish I could say as much for the court."¹⁵

The arrival of Buol threw the French minister into a veritable panic, especially as the Austrian immediately manifested his intention of ignoring Montgelas and levying a direct attack upon the Elector. That prince had promised to demand the evacuation of his country and the right to remain neutral, but Otto doubted his firmness:

I await with the greatest impatience the arrival of our troops. I have to do with the most feeble, the most timid, and the most inconstant prince of Europe. My position at London was less delicate and less disagreeable than that in which circumstances have placed me in the last fifteen days.¹⁶

The offers of the Austrian envoy were now of a very flattering nature. He first expressed Austria's readiness to agree to the previous Bavarian demand of joining the coalition as a separate corps. Then, if the war were successful, the Elector would receive Salzburg, the royal title, and a sum of money. When this offer was refused, he suggested that Bavaria might remain neutral, though disarming her troops. Even Montgelas was

¹⁵ Dispatch of 1 complémentaire an XIII (Sept. 18, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, 179.

¹⁶ Dispatch of 4 complémentaire an XIII (Sept. 21, 1805). *Ibid.*, 181, no. 184.

now shaken, and he spoke to Otto in a manner which portended a new change of policy. The latter never ceased in his despairing appeals for a speedy arrival of the French troops:

Until this junction is effected we cannot count on the alliance of Bavaria; after that there will not be any defection to fear. My position is a singular one. We have for us the majority of the civil employees, the army, and the people. We have against us the timidity of the prince, the nobility of the court, and particularly the tears of Madame the Electrice.¹⁷

The news of the approach of the corps of Marmont and Bernadotte finally decided the day in favor of the French. In a last desperate effort to secure at least the non-participation of Bavaria on the side of the French, Buol had pleaded for armed neutrality, in return for which Austria would assure the Elector of all the advantages which originally she had not been willing to grant even for his alliance.¹⁸ But with the French troops so near, even the Elector realized that further hesitation was impossible, and the Austrian offers were at last definitely rejected. On September 26 the advance guard of the army of Hanover entered Würzburg. So swift and silent had been the march of Bernadotte, that Buol had heard of his approach only the day before his arrival.¹⁹ On September 24 he had written home: "I trust myself to the assurance that the Elector so far has not thought of uniting his troops with the French."²⁰ Four hours before Bernadotte's entrance into the city, the Austrian minister, finally disillusioned, left for Vienna.

There was only one final difficulty to overcome before the Elector would consent to the ratification of the treaty of Au-

¹⁷ To Talleyrand, 5 complémentaire an XIII (Sept. 30, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 185.

¹⁸ Otto to Talleyrand, 3 vendémiaire an XIV (Sept. 25, 1805). *Ibid.*, 181, no. 188. Buol was of course not authorized to make any such offers, and there is every possibility that he would have been disavowed. Montgelas says in his memoirs that if these proposals had been made in May they would have been accepted without question. M. Montgelas, *Denkwürdigkeiten* (1887), pp. 110-111.

¹⁹ Otto to Talleyrand, 6 vendémiaire an XIV (Sept. 28, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 189.

²⁰ Ledermann, *Der Anschluss Bayerns*, p. 75.

gust 24. Maximilian Joseph and his advisers feared that their conduct would suffer in the eyes of the Bavarian people as well as in Germany generally if it were known that they had arrived at an understanding with France at a date anterior to the Austrian invasion. Montgelas therefore suggested that the date of the treaty be changed to September 23, so that the whole arrangement would have the appearance of being the result of the violation of Bavarian neutrality. It would deprive Austria of the opportunity of saying that she had known of the secret connection between Paris and Munich and had in consequence sought to anticipate the Elector's perfidy. Otto strongly favored this scheme: "Nothing could be more useful to us in Germany, and especially in Bavaria, than to present ourselves in this war as the protectors of the Elector, who without our succor would have been irrevocably lost."²¹

The idea was endorsed with alacrity by Napoleon. No one could be more anxious than he to present his cause in a favorable light. The change of date would also serve to prevent Prussia from feeling slighted for not having been taken into his confidence. So the treaty was announced to have been signed at Würzburg on September 23, ratified by the Elector at the same place on the twenty-eighth, and by Napoleon at Strasbourg on the twenty-ninth.²² Henceforth in his communications to his fellow-sovereigns, as well as in his message to the Senate and in the proclamations to his army, the Emperor represents himself as the champion of the independence of the German states against the aggressions of the House of Austria.²³ The

²¹ To Talleyrand, 3 complémentaire an XII (Sept. 20, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 182.

²² Montgelas was so urgent regarding this alteration that Otto felt himself justified in agreeing to it before the Emperor's authorization had arrived. Dispatches of the 9 and 17 vendémiaire an XIV (Oct. 1 and 9, 1805). *Ibid.*, 181, nos. 190, 197.

²³ Thus in the *Ordre de Jour* of October 23: "Soldats, la guerre de la troisième coalition est commencé. L'armée autrichienne a passé l'Inn, violé les traités, attaqué et chassé de sa capitale notre allié. . . . Nous ne nous arrêtons plus que nous n'ayons assuré l'indépendance du Corps germanique, secouru nos alliés et confondu l'orgueil des injustes agresseurs." And to the Bavarian troops: "Je me suis mis à la tête de mon armée pour délivrer votre patrie d'injustes

publication of official documents connected with the rupture between France and Austria, which appeared at Paris early in October, was particularly efficacious in influencing public opinion in the neutral states in favor of the former.²⁴ As late as December Metternich was still speaking in his reports of the ". . . extraordinary effect produced by the publication of the various official documents which preceded the rupture between us and France."²⁵

Napoleon had a much larger personal share in securing the final adhesion of Württemberg than in that of Bavaria. In giving his promise to join his troops to France, Frederick had yielded only with manifest reluctance to the demands of Didelot. His first reaction to the minister's overtures had been to break into loud protests and inform the representative of Austria.²⁶ When Didelot returned from Carlsruhe without the alliance of Charles Frederick, Frederick apparently thought that he could afford to delay also. Didelot, who had received the project for a treaty from Talleyrand,²⁷ tried his best to arrive at a definitive settlement, but the Elector remained obdurate. Meanwhile the conduct of the Austrians proved as impolitic as it had in Bavaria. The Württembergers were similarly obliged to accept the depreciated notes of the Bank of Vienna, were subjected to forced labor, and found their most justifiable complaints ignored. When Ney's corps entered Frederick's do-

agressions. *La Maison d'Autriche veut détruire votre indépendance et vous incorporer à ses vastes États.*" Picard and Tuetey, *Correspondance inédite de Napoléon*, I, no. 205.

²⁴ These "Pièces officielles" contained the "Exposé de la conduite réciproque de la France et de l'Autriche, depuis la paix de Luneville," which was read by Talleyrand to the Senate on September 22, as well as a large number of the notes exchanged between France and Austria with marginal comments on those of the latter. A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 27, no. 6 (marked erroneously 83).

²⁵ To Colloredo, Dec. 7, 1805. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Dec.), fol. 74-75.

²⁶ This, at least, is the tale related to Maximilian Joseph by Schwarzenberg. Otto to Talleyrand, 23 fructidor an XIII (Sept. 12, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 172.

²⁷ By the terms of this project Württemberg was to furnish two thousand horses to the French army and coöperate in the war against Austria with eight to ten thousand men. Talleyrand to Didelot (date illegible), probably Sept. 20, 1805. A.E., WÜRTTEMBERG, 41, no. 75.

minions, the latter forbade him to enter Stuttgart or Ludwigsburg. The heedless marshal paid no attention to this prohibition, but forced the gates of Stuttgart by threatening with his cannon.

When Napoleon arrived at Ludwigsburg on October 2, matters still hung in the balance. The Emperor's stay at Ludwigsburg can be described as a great personal triumph. Immediately after his arrival he had gone to see the Electrice, who as the daughter of George III was naturally the soul of the anti-French party. By conversing with this princess about English literature and praising English institutions Napoleon was able to charm her completely.²⁸ The next day he had a protracted conference with the Elector, who emerged from the interview exhausted but smiling. Frederick at last confessed himself convinced that the salvation of his house lay in an intimate union with France. Later he remarked that he had never met with such wonderful eloquence except in the case of Frederick the Great. The effect of Napoleon's visit upon the inhabitants of Ludwigsburg was described with some elation by Didelot to Talleyrand:

Your Excellency knows too well the impression which His Majesty makes upon the hearts and spirit of those who have the happiness to approach him so that it would be unnecessary to inform you in detail of that which he has left here. Admiration and respect preceded the arrival of His Majesty; gratitude, attachment, and the most sincere regret have all accompanied his departure.²⁹

We do not know exactly what was decided in the interview between the two sovereigns, but it appears that they struck a bargain in which Frederick agreed to join France with all his forces in return for liberal promises of aggrandizement and the support of Napoleon in the conflict with his Estates. It was also

²⁸ The news of the conversion of the Electrice created quite a sensation in British society. Thus Lady Bessborough to Lord Gower: "Think of the King's eldest daughter writing her mother a letter full of praises of Buonaparte, saying he is much belied." Nov. 30, 1805. Gower, *Private Correspondence*, II, 139.

²⁹ 14 vendémiaire an XIV (Oct. 6, 1805). A.E., WÜRTTEMBERG, 41, no. 94.

upon Württemberg that the Emperor counted particularly in his plan of destroying the last vestiges of the Holy Roman Empire.

Yet it had been convenient to proclaim himself the protector of the German constitution at the very time that he was preparing its dissolution. The bulletins which were sent to the Diet at Regensburg announced the "prodigies" that were avenging the German Empire for the invasion of one of its principal states. Meanwhile everything was being done to undermine what he had ostensibly come to protect. To discredit the Diet as much as possible was one of his chief aims, for the achievement of which the support of the larger states was certain. To Frederick of Württemberg he wrote early in November:

In the instruction which you give to your minister it is necessary to determine that portion of Germanic usage which should be abolished, that which serves to give to the Emperor a power which is not compensated for in any way. . . . I mean first of all the Aulic Council and a great part of the functions of the Diet, which is in fact no more than a veritable monkey-house.³⁰

The princes were already being encouraged to carry out their long-cherished plans for the spoliation of the equestrian order. When the knights appealed to the Diet, it would be another strong argument for the views expressed by Napoleon about that body. The part played by the Aulic Council in the previous year had also served to make it unpopular with the South German princes. But the Emperor's purpose went further than the mere abolition of the remaining imperial forms. We find little reference in 1805 to the association of princes so frequently discussed in the year before, but that the idea had taken root in Napoleon's mind and been discussed at some length with Talleyrand is evident from a note to that minister on October 2: "I intend to include Hesse-Darmstadt in my German confederation, composed of Bavaria, Darmstadt, Württemberg, and Baden."³¹ It had apparently been decided for some time what

³⁰ Nov. 2, 1805. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9444.

³¹ *Ibid.*, XI, no. 9307. Louis of Hesse-Darmstadt was the least willing of the South German princes to join Napoleon, and he sought desperately to secure

would be for Germany the results of a successful war. In the period of which we are writing, however, the campaign was far from over, and many a military and diplomatic contest remained to be fought before the Emperor would be able to dictate his plan for a new German settlement.

While the different alliances were materializing, the Austrian army was becoming entangled in the net which had been prepared for it. With almost unbelievable negligence and optimism General Mack had advanced upon Ulm. He was certain that Napoleon's army would approach through the passes of the Black Forest, and none of his officers could persuade him of the contrary. Napoleon's hope was that the Austrians would remain in their position long enough to permit his left wing to cross the Danube and appear in their rear.³² He was favored by the credulity of the Austrian commander, who relied entirely on information regarding a supposed landing of the English at Boulogne and the outbreak of a revolution at Paris. Mack became obsessed with the idea that the French army was in full retreat, even issuing orders for a "pursuit."³³ When he finally became aware of the fact that he was surrounded, he made himself ridiculous by first issuing proclamations to the effect that he would hold out to the last man, and then surrendering ignominiously.

After the surrender Mack said to Napoleon that his defeat was due to the advantage gained by the French in their passage through the Prussian territory of Ansbach, adding that he could have escaped if he had chosen to violate Prussian neutrality at another point. When the Emperor asked why he had not done

the intervention of Prussia. The Emperor, however, took little ceremony with him, writing to Talleyrand: "The Prince of Hesse-Darmstadt can give us 4,000 men; there is no need of allowing him to remain neutral. Send a courier to my minister at his court, in order to negotiate a treaty of alliance." *Ibid.*, XI, no. 9157.

³² "Les Autrichiennes sont sur les débouchés de la forêt noire; Dieu veuille qu'ils y restent. Ma seule crainte est que nous leur faissions trop peur." To Talleyrand, Sept. 27, 1805. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9270.

³³ Wertheimer, *Geschichte Oesterreichs*, I, 301; Lord Gower to Lady Bessborough, Nov. 16, 1805. Gower, *Correspondence*, II, 142.

so, the General replied: "Because we do not dare to take liberties which Your Majesty's preponderating power enables him to take." ³⁴ Though Mack might have been entrapped even if the army of Hanover had not taken so direct a part in this phase of the campaign, it undoubtedly would have been a far more difficult and complicated task. The coöperation of these troops, however, was bought at a heavy price, for Prussia now decided to join the coalition. This factor again placed the outcome of the war in doubt — would Napoleonic diplomacy succeed in rendering it a negligible one?

³⁴ Beer, *Zehn Jahre oesterreichischer Politik*, p. 159.

CHAPTER XXI

PRUSSIA'S DILEMMA

IN THE last days of August Duroc had been dispatched from Boulogne to make a final plea for a Franco-Prussian alliance at Berlin. Napoleon, however, now wished to identify Prussia with his war system, while Frederick William would not consider any plan whose basic aim was not the maintenance of peace. Duroc's demand that Prussia menace Austria by military demonstrations opened the eyes of the King to the change in Napoleon's policy. He was now convinced that the Emperor only wished to draw him into the war, and he very plainly told Duroc that he could not negotiate on the proposed basis. The French would have to consent to the complete independence of the Holy Roman Empire, Holland, Switzerland, and what yet remained free in Italy.¹ These guarantees, however, were precisely what Duroc had been forbidden to enter upon,² and their refusal practically entailed the failure of the negotiations. The envoy had to admit on September 8 that there remained but slight prospect for the success of his mission and that the King would probably return to his system of neutrality.³ Thus the alliance between France and Prussia had become virtually impossible long before the violation of Ansbach and was not forestalled by that fateful event. Under the circumstances Duroc appears to have done as well as could have been expected, and Talleyrand's accusation that the failure was the result of his awkwardness is certainly unjust.⁴ Duroc was anything but a brilliant figure, yet he possessed the entire confidence of Napo-

¹ Duroc to Talleyrand, Sept. 3. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 274.

² Instructions to Duroc, Aug. 24. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9126.

³ To Napoleon. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 277.

⁴ Talleyrand says in his *Mémoires* (I, 294): "Duroc par sa rudesse maladroite, détruisit les bons effets des démarches faites précédemment d'après mes instructions par M. de Laforest."

leon and had shown tact and good sense on more than one previous diplomatic mission. Neither in the very full reports of Metternich, who kept a close watch on his activities, nor in the communications between the Prussian statesmen do we find the slightest reference to any faux pas on his part.

The French envoys, although seeing that an understanding on the basis formulated in their instructions was quite out of the question, continued the negotiations in order to give Napoleon time to advance into Germany and to disquiet the Austrians with the prospect of a Franco-Prussian alliance. By adopting this course they were also in a position to take advantage of any favorable turn of events or to neutralize the ill effects of an unfortunate one.

The Prussian government now in effect returned to the system of strict neutrality, and the slight credit and standing which it still enjoyed depended entirely on its ability to protect it against every comer. As some hope was still entertained that an arrangement between the powers could be reached, a courier was sent to Vienna with a personal letter from the King to Emperor Francis. Frederick William informed his fellow-sovereign of the mission of Duroc and expressed his opinion that the French would yet agree to the guarantees proposed by Prussia. As these seemed to be in conformity with Austria's principal interests, would she consent to suspend her operations and enter into negotiations? ⁵ While awaiting the reply to this overture, Hardenberg was to hold over the French envoys, and the efforts to reach a modus vivendi on the question of Hanover were to be continued.

In the course of the different negotiations which were carried on between England, Russia, and Austria, the principle that Prussia could justifiably be coerced into joining the coalition had come to be accepted by all parties. Rumors of such a project had been current early in 1804 and had so much disturbed Napoleon that he had instituted inquiries regarding the attitude of the court of Berlin on the question. That the idea

⁵ Sept. 4, 1805. Copy in *Page Papers*, II, 209-210.

was actually being considered at St. Petersburg as early as this date can be deduced from a dispatch of Paget's of April 2, 1804, in which he tells of its being advanced in a most positive manner by the Russian ambassador, Razumovsky, immediately after his return from a visit to St. Petersburg.⁶ A few months later the bustling Gustavus of Sweden came forward with a plan of his own, which he sought to communicate to the Russian government through d'Antraigues. On a visit to Dresden he had two conferences with the intriguing counselor of the Russian legation, pronounced the Tsar to be the only sovereign in Europe who might put an end to the "tyranny of Bonaparte," and proposed an interview between Alexander, Frederick William, and himself. If they should prove unable to convince the Prussian by the force of reason it might be done by the threat of using arms.⁷ We do not know whether these suggestions had a stimulating effect at St. Petersburg or not, but when in February of 1805 Wintzingerode came to Berlin, he told Metternich that everything was settled in regard to the coercion of Prussia. Somewhat later the Tsar's envoy was able to win over Cobenzl to the idea. The chief advocate of such a policy at St. Petersburg had been Prince Czartoryski, whose influence with his sovereign had been constantly waxing since his promotion to the ministry of foreign affairs. His task of converting Alexander to an anti-Prussian posture was not an easy one, owing to the sentimental friendship between the idealistic Tsar and the quiet, reserved Frederick William since their meeting at Memel in 1802. The suspicion that Prussia was secretly acting in concert with Napoleon served to cool the warmth of the Tsar's feelings, and the urgings of the young Pole finally appeared to bear fruit. On August 29 there arrived in Berlin a letter of the Tsar, which, after a long exposition of the cause of Europe against

⁶ To Hawkesbury. *Ibid.*, II, 103.

⁷ D'Antraigues' "Relation littéraire de mes deux entrevues avec S. M. le roi de Suède" is given complete in "Gustave IV et le comte d'Antraigues (1804)," *Nouvelle Revue Rétrospective* (1903), pp. 172-184. D'Antraigues also discussed his conversations with Gustavus in a letter to Cobenzl, Sept. 21, 1804. In Fournier, *Gentz und Cobenzl*, pp. 226-230.

France, demanded Prussian coöperation in restricting the disturber. Frederick William's reply was an outright refusal; instead he spoke of the mission of Duroc and the possibilities of arriving at an agreement. He would defend his neutrality against anyone who sought to coerce him.⁸ On the next day the order to put 80,000 men on a war footing was issued, and Hardenberg gave Alopeus the positive assurance that his master would never allow his hand to be forced.⁹

The Russian ambassador was in a state of intense agitation, for his sentiments were equally divided between Russia and Prussia, and he could not reconcile himself to the idea of a rupture. His instructions provided that if the Prussians had not given way by September 23, he was to announce the passage of the Russian troops for the twenty-eighth, the idea of the cabinet of St. Petersburg being that it would then be too late to halt the advance by a courier sent from Berlin.¹⁰ The ambassador was of service to the cause of the coalition in that he on the one hand tried to make clear to his government that Prussia would never permit herself to be coerced, while on the other he exceeded his instructions and as early as September 18 informed Hardenberg of the intended coup.¹¹ He apparently hoped that the rupture would be avoided either by the submission of Prussia or by the fact that her military measures would give the allies pause.

The certainty that the Russians intended to march in without the requested permission aroused the Prussian chiefs to action. On September 19 a conference took place at the residence of the Duke of Brunswick in which Hardenberg, Haugwitz, Schulemburg, and Generals Rüchel, Mollendorff, and Kalkreuth took part. General mobilization was decided upon, and the army was to be concentrated on the eastern frontier. In order to gain

⁸ Letters of the two sovereigns in Bailieu, *Briefwechsel*, nos. 68, 69.

⁹ Metternich to Colloredo, Sept. 7. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 80 (Sept.), fol. 20-21.

¹⁰ Czartoryski to Alopeus, Aug. 19, 1805. *Sbornik*, LXXXII, 123 ff.

¹¹ Metternich suspected the Russian of this indiscretion, and he complained frequently of lack of coöperation and firmness in his colleague. To Colloredo, Sept. 20 and 22, 1805. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Sept.), fol. 78-83, 90-92.

time the King dispatched a letter to the Tsar, in which he agreed to the conference Alexander had recently suggested, but declared at the same time that the passage of the Russians would never be tolerated.¹² It was whispered in the diplomatic corps that the King had told Hardenberg he would rather bury himself amidst the ruins of his monarchy than submit to the outrage. To General Merveldt, who had come from Vienna to win Prussia to the cause of the coalition, Frederick William spoke of his pain and resentment at the Tsar's conduct. How could he join in a combination against France when the allies would not even inform Prussia of the bases upon which they were willing to treat? The late ultimatum of Novosiltzov had been of such a nature that Napoleon could never have accepted it, nor would any power in the world in the position similar to that of France have done so. Prussia herself had no complaint against the government of Paris.¹³ Merveldt's entreaties concerning the equilibrium of Europe did not arouse the pacific monarch, who was no more fitted for the rôle of crusader than of adventurer. In the hope that Austria would yet be able to restrain her ally, the Prussians being entirely unaware that the court of Vienna concurred in Russia's plans of coercion, Haugwitz was selected to bear a last appeal for moderation to Emperor Francis.¹⁴

Meanwhile the negotiations with the French envoys for an arrangement on Hanover continued. Napoleon had hoped that Prussia would be brought to his side by the Austrian violation of Bavaria, a view in which he had been encouraged by the fact that the Prussian minister at Munich, Baron von Schladen, had been the only member of the diplomatic corps to follow the Elector to Würzburg and had there counseled him to arrive at an understanding with France. But the minister of Württem-

¹² Protocol of the conference of September 19, Hardenberg, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, V, 176. Letter of the King to the Tsar, Sept. 21. Bailieu, *Briefwechsel*, no. 71. Report of Merveldt to Colloredo, Sept. 19. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Sept.), fol. 74, 77.

¹³ Merveldt to Colloredo, Sept. 16. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Sept.), fol. 43-49.

¹⁴ Metternich had not the slightest faith in the success of this mission and frankly told the Prussians as much. Metternich to Colloredo, Sept. 20. *Ibid.*, 82 (Sept.), fol. 78-83.

berg had revealed at Berlin that Napoleon had peremptorily demanded the coöperation of the South German states in a war against Austria and had characterized any neutrality on their part as illusory. Why should Prussia defend in the interest of France what the Emperor himself held in such slight regard? So the Prussian statesmen refused to make any kind of protest about the violation of Maximilian Joseph's territories; in fact, neither Hardenberg nor the King hesitated to express their approval of the procedure to Metternich and Merveldt.¹⁵ When on September 27 Duroc and Laforest again made overtures for an alliance, they received no encouragement whatsoever. On the next day they submitted a new project which had just arrived from Paris. Prussia was to occupy Hanover and pay a stipulated sum to France, which was to retain its right of conquest; the court of Berlin would then undertake the guarantee of the neutrality of the Electorate and of Holland.

To these suggestions Hardenberg replied with a counter-project, which omitted the money payment and the guarantee of Holland, while France was to guarantee the neutrality of all of North Germany. Napoleon, if he had accepted this arrangement, would have obligated himself to defend Prussia against the attack by Russia which was then threatening, although Prussia left the question of the right of conquest unsettled. All that would have been gained by the arrangement would have been that Prussia instead of the allied powers would have occupied the now unprotected Hanover. It was evidently Hardenberg's intention to prolong the negotiations with the French until the difficulties with Russia had cleared up.¹⁶

At St. Petersburg the representations of Alopeus had at last inclined the wavering Tsar to a policy of greater caution. Frederick William's willingness to meet his former friend seemed to offer the alternative suggested by Gustavus of Sweden in the previous year, that of bringing his personal influence to bear

¹⁵ Metternich to Colloredo, Sept. 16; Merveldt to Colloredo of the same. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Sept.), fol. 28-30, 43-49.

¹⁶ He admits as much in his memoirs. *Denkwürdigkeiten*, II, 252.

upon the Prussian monarch. To the great disgust of Czartoryski and the anti-Prussian party, the order to suspend the march across the frontier was issued. On October 5 Prince Dolgoruki, one of the Tsar's favorite aides-de-camp, appeared in Berlin with a letter for Frederick William in which his delight at the approaching interview was expressed, though the demand for a free passage was repeated.¹⁷ The next day he went in company with Alopeus to present the Tsar's message to the King. Frederick William was polite but firm, declaring his irrevocable intention of resisting any violation of his neutrality by force of arms. In parting he said: "Return to the Emperor, gentlemen, and inform him of my unalterable decision. I will write him a letter to that effect."¹⁸ The envoys gloomily retired to the Austrian embassy to relate to Metternich the failure of their mission. Hardly had they left the palace when a courier arrived with the news of the violation of the territory of Ansbach in Bernadotte's march from Würzburg.

Never perhaps in history has an incident similar in character to the violation of Ansbach changed a critical situation so completely. Napoleon certainly did not anticipate anything like the reaction which his rash act produced. During the war of the Second Coalition Ansbach had not been included in the Prussian line of demarcation, passage through the King's Franconian possessions being expressly permitted by one of the conventions which supplemented the Treaty of Basel.¹⁹ The French probably took it for granted that the same kind of arrangement would sooner or later be made in 1805. The reason that Napoleon ordered the passage without notifying the court of Berlin was not so much that he expected its refusal, but because to have done so would have delayed his operations and revealed his military plans at a time when everything depended upon secrecy, precision, and rapidity of movement. That Prussia would resent such precipitation and lack of ceremony could well be assumed,

¹⁷ Sept. 27, 1805. Bailleu, *Briefwechsel*, no. 72.

¹⁸ Metternich, *Memoirs*, I, 32.

¹⁹ Article 5 of the Convention of August 5, 1796. De Clercq, *Recueil des traités*, I, 297-281.

seriously compromised him on the side of the coalition.²⁶ It can justifiably be assumed that the swift decision of the King and his minister after the violation of Ansbach was less the result of genuine indignation than the relief of weak and undecided men who found themselves forced into the path which they preferred but had not dared to tread.²⁷

In the first moment of wrath Frederick William had been on the point of dismissing Duroc and declaring war immediately, but Hardenberg was now the one to counsel reflection.²⁸ The minister was in consequence ordered to proceed to Berlin and assemble a council, consisting of the Duke of Brunswick, Mollendorff, and Schulemburg. "All received with joy the news which delivered them from such great embarrassment," remarks Alopeus.²⁹ The program which they adopted was endorsed by the King. All obligations to France were considered at an end, and the allies of Prussia — Saxony, Nassau, Hesse-Cassel, and the lesser North German states — were called upon to join her in defensive preparations. On October 9 the King wrote to the Tsar that his neutrality system had received its final blow at the hands of the French and that there would be no further hindrance to the Russian passage.³⁰ On the same day Hardenberg informed Metternich in confidence that his master had passed to the side of the coalition "with all his forces."³¹

²⁶ Thus on September 1 he had said to Alopeus that he saw the impossibility of remaining neutral, and on the sixteenth: "J'ai déclaré au Roi qu'il ne lui restait que le parti de livrer le bouclier." To the Russian's query as to against whom the shield was to be raised, he protested: "Eh! Pouvez-vous demander? Contre la France." He complained that the King's entourage caused him much anxiety, Haugwitz being the only one whose principles were to be relied upon. Reports of Metternich, Sept. 2, 16. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Sept.), fol. 1-2, 62-63.

²⁷ The violent language of the Franconian officials in their report contributed much to the King's ire. They spoke of the passage as an attack upon the national honor and described the conduct of the French and Bavarians as that of a conquering army. Metternich to Colloredo, Oct. 7. *Ibid.*, 82 (Oct.), fol. 54-55.

²⁸ Laforest to Talleyrand, Oct. 9. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 291.

²⁹ To the Tsar, Oct. 6. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Oct.), fol. 56.

³⁰ Bailleu, *Briefwechsel*, no. 75.

³¹ "Der Preussische Minister Baron Hardenberg hat im Vertrauen benachrichtigt, dass der König mit seiner ganzen Macht an unsere Seite getreten sei." To Colloredo, Oct. 10. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Oct.), fol. 63-64.

On October 13 the order was given for the Prussian troops to turn westward and occupy Hanover, taking care that friction with the remnant of the French forces was reduced to a minimum. Two days later Hardenberg informed the Austrian ambassador that his previous communication might now be regarded as official and reported to the government of Vienna as such.³²

The position of Duroc and Laforest was an extremely difficult and embarrassing one. Even the leaders of the pro-French party momentarily turned against them. Old Marshal Mollendorff, formerly one of the warmest of their supporters, now shrilled that the honor of the Prussian army would have to be avenged. The circumspect and dignified Duke of Brunswick spoke with the rashness and fire of the youngest officers.³³ No one paid any attention to their excuses, and Hardenberg refused to see them on the insulting plea of "lack of time."³⁴

One must not believe that Napoleon had left his representatives lacking argumentative weapons with which to defend his cause. That the passage would cause a certain resentment he had of course known from the start, but he had not in the least foreseen the storm which did break loose. It appears that the first serious apprehension of a possible rupture was awakened by the protestations of the Elector of Bavaria, who was extremely sensitive to anything which might offend the Prussians.³⁵ The Prussian envoy, Baron von Schladen, made a tremendous fuss, and even spoke of the probability of a declaration of war if Napoleon's orders were carried out, but Bernadotte would not allow himself to be moved.³⁶ For a moment Maximilian Joseph

³² To Colloredo, Oct. 15. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Oct.), fol. 68-69.

³³ Laforest to Talleyrand, Oct. 9. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 291.

³⁴ Duroc to Napoleon, Oct. 9. *Ibid.*, II, no. 292.

³⁵ The Bavarians feared that the Prussians might take the opportunity to enlarge their possessions in Franconia. "M. de Montgelas," says Otto in a report of January 3, 1805, "a si peu de confiance dans la politique de la Cour de Berlin, que si les Autrichiens envahissoient la Bavière, il ne seroit pas surpris de voir occuper la Franconie bavaroise par les Prussiens." A.E., BAVIÈRE, supplément 11, no. 96.

³⁶ Otto to Napoleon, 12 vendémiaire an XIV (Oct. 4, 1805). A.E., BAVIÈRE, supplément 11, no. 116.

made as if to order his generals not to follow the prescribed route, only to be reminded by Otto that his troops were no longer at his disposal.³⁷ The Emperor wrote a reassuring note to his ally,³⁸ but at the same time he sent a message to Duroc in which he defended the passage very skillfully. He pointed out that during the last war Ansbach and Bayreuth had not been included within Prussia's neutrality line and that both territories had been passed through by the armies of the various belligerents. He maintained that Prussia should have placed an army corps in her Franconian possessions and declared her intentions if she had wished to include them in her general neutrality.³⁹ These arguments were further elaborated upon in the communication to the Elector and in another to Otto.⁴⁰ He accused the Austrians of having violated Prussian territory at another point and justified his own action from the standpoint of military necessity. Instructions were also sent to Talleyrand to draw up an additional note for the use of Duroc and Laforest in their discussion of the French point of view.⁴¹

The French envoys did their best to demonstrate that no insult had been intended. Taking his cue from the instructions forwarded by Talleyrand, Duroc referred to Articles III and V of the Convention of August 5, 1796, which declared that the belligerent powers could cross the territories of the King of Prussia not included in the neutrality line. He also argued that Prussia herself was responsible for the misunderstanding, as she had emphasized the neutrality of North Germany alone.⁴² But Frederick William was deaf to these pleas. A short, almost curt letter of Napoleon's, which was very far from an apology, only served to incense him still further.⁴³ Hardenberg called it "positively indecent" in a communication to the King,⁴⁴ and on October 14 a note drawn up by Lombard informed the French that

³⁷ Otto to Napoleon, 12 vendémiaire an XIV (Oct. 4, 1805). A.E., Bavière, supplément 11, no. 117.

³⁸ Oct. 2. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9314.

³⁹ Oct. 2. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9316.

⁴⁰ Oct. 2. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9315.

⁴¹ Oct. 3. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9319.

⁴² Hardenberg, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, II, 285.

⁴³ Oct. 5. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9342.

⁴⁴ Oct. 13. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 294.

"... the King does not know whether to be more surprised over the violence which the French armies have permitted themselves in his provinces or the impossible arguments brought up for their justification."⁴⁵

Frederick William, however, was not yet as ready to plunge into the war as his preliminary measures might indicate. "*Le Roi marchera parcequ'il devra marcher*," Metternich aptly described his attitude to Colloredo.⁴⁶ The news of the French successes threw the court of Berlin into consternation. The French publicity service was organized with marvelous efficiency and knew how to exploit them to the full. Otto acted as a go-between in the communications of the Emperor and Talleyrand with the French envoys in the Prussian capital, and he was careful to dispatch a courier with the news of each successive victory. The Austrian legation on the contrary was left completely without information, and Hardenberg complained to Metternich of the bad effect his enforced silence had upon public opinion.⁴⁷ On October 16 the approaching surrender of Mack was already known in Berlin, the news being carefully disseminated by Duroc and Laforest. Hardenberg, who only the day before had confirmed to Metternich his previous statement regarding the adhesion of his master to the coalition with all his forces, immediately evidenced a disposition to hedge on this declaration. He now startled the ambassador by informing him that His Majesty was ready to accede to the armed mediation which the two imperial courts had demanded of him. When the irritated Austrian protested and recalled the minister's previous declarations, Hardenberg denied "... that the King had ever said that he regarded the violation of his territory as a declaration of war."⁴⁸ Thus the entire basis of Prussia's coöperation with the coalitionary powers was changed at one stroke.

⁴⁵ Copy in S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Oct.), fol. 90-91.

⁴⁶ Oct. 16. *Ibid.*, 82 (Oct.), fol. 69-71.

⁴⁷ Metternich to Colloredo, Oct. 16. *Ibid.*, 82 (Oct.), fol. 79.

⁴⁸ "Votre Excellence se convaincra, par l'espèce de controverse que je lui sou mets, que le langage de la Cour de Berlin a plié, malgré ce qu'on dit le Ministre de Cabinet." Oct. 16. *Ibid.*, 82 (Oct.), fol. 80-83.

The hope of the allied diplomats now rested on the approaching visit of Alexander, whose personal charm might do much to determine the hesitating King.⁴⁹ On receiving Frederick William's letter of October 9 the Tsar had discarded an epistle which he had been on the point of dispatching and which would probably have resulted in war.⁵⁰ Instead he had announced his intention of coming to see the King in Berlin, a decision not at all agreeable to the Prussian statesmen. While the Tsar's arrival in the Prussian capital was greeted by an outburst of popular enthusiasm, the King himself looked forward to the interview with apprehension. He was determined not to bind himself to anything not in accord with his idea of mediation, though it was now to be armed and one-sided. It was on this fact that the hopes of Alexander were based:

Everything will arrange itself [he said to Metternich soon after his arrival]. They are wrapped up in their idea of mediation; we will see — this mediation cannot be anything but an ultimatum, which Bonaparte certainly will not accept. We will receive an insolent reply before the three weeks which they need here to prepare their army are over.⁵¹

In the negotiations which followed the Tsar's arrival, Brunswick was the military and Haugwitz the political representative of Prussia, while Czartoryski spoke for Russia and Metternich for Austria. The two sovereigns at times took part in the conferences, as did Hardenberg, Dolgoruki, and Alopeus. From the extended report of Metternich upon the negotiations, it would appear that the Prussians disputed every step. Czartoryski began with the submission of a project by which Prussia would simply adhere to the coalition, while Haugwitz proposed

⁴⁹ At first the Austrians had looked upon the interview of the two sovereigns with apprehension. On the one hand they feared that Alexander might be won back to his pro-Prussian policy of 1801-1803, while on the other they did not trust the Tsar to remain silent upon the part they had played in the plan of intimidating Prussia. "Assurément cette découverte ne servira pas à nous concilier l'amitié de la Prusse." Metternich to Colloredo, Sept. 22. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Sept.), fol. 98-101.

⁵⁰ The draft of this letter is given by Bailleu (*Briefwechsel*, no. 74). After speaking of his surprise and shock at the news of Prussia's armaments, the Tsar again demands the right of passage and threatens with "counter-measures."

⁵¹ Metternich to Colloredo, Oct. 29. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Oct.), fol. 112-117.

only a very moderate form of armed mediation. Unfortunately for the allies, Hardenberg's illness left the negotiations almost entirely in his colleague's hands, and he stubbornly disputed every step. Lombard is accused by Metternich of altering the protocols of the various meetings overnight, so that the allied negotiators were repeatedly forced to recommence the discussion upon points which were believed to have been settled. The final convention, signed at Potsdam on November 3, did not by any means represent the full views of the allied powers, but as Metternich declared in his report, there was only the choice of taking what they could get or receiving nothing.⁵² The pact centered about the following points:

- 1) Prussia agrees to offer her mediation to the belligerent nations and will demand of Napoleon:
 - a) The immediate separation of the crowns of France and Italy.
 - b) The indemnification of the King of Sardinia in Italy.
 - c) The guarantee of the independence of Naples, Holland, Switzerland, and the states of the Holy Roman Empire.
 - d) The extension of the Austrian frontier to the Mincio.
- 2) If the above demands are not agreed to by December 15, Prussia will join the coalition with 180,000 men.
- 3) England shall be summoned to supply Prussia and her North German allies with subsidies in proportion to the number of troops brought into the field.
- 4) (Secret) The allied powers pledge themselves to use their good offices to secure Hanover for Prussia in the final treaty of peace.

At the first glance it would appear that this convention rendered Prussia's intervention in the war on the side of the coalition inevitable. It was certain that Napoleon could never grant the demands which were to compose the Prussian ultimatum,

⁵² Special report of Metternich on the Treaty of Potsdam, November 4, 1805. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82. Earlier investigators than the present writer such as

and to Frederick William there would then remain no alternative but to join in the conflict against France. The weakness of the treaty lay in the fact that over a month and a half would elapse before the principal North German power was obliged to declare herself a member of the alliance. Metternich had realized this so well, that he had long held out for the insertion of an article by which the Prussian negotiator who carried the ultimatum to Napoleon would demand an answer within forty-eight hours if the Austrian armies on the Inn were again defeated or if Vienna were menaced. He lays the blame on Haugwitz for its rejection and the insertion of the less favorable clause, but the attitude of the latter was so entirely compatible with the views of his master that its insertion can hardly be ascribed entirely to his initiative. Moreover, the Prussian military chiefs appear to have been honestly convinced that the army could not be efficiently mobilized before the middle of December, thus justifying their insistence upon a postponement of hostilities.

However sincere the intentions of the Prussian statesmen may have been at the time, the fact remains that they fought for and secured a position of which an opportunistic government could take a double advantage. That some, if not all, of the Prussian leaders were sensible to the advantages of the situation is shown in a letter written at a somewhat earlier date to Hardenberg by the Duke of Brunswick: "If the King succeeds in maintaining his neutrality for some time at least, there will arrive a period when he will be able to decide the fate of Europe."⁵³ This opportunity had come, but would Frederick William and his ministers be able and resolute enough to grasp it and turn it to their advantage? In view of the foreign policy of Prussia during the previous five years, one may well doubt whether it could succeed in any contest which required decision, perseverance, and a mastery of diplomatic strategy.

⁵³ Sept. 22, 1805. Quoted from Bailleu, "Haugwitz und Hardenberg," *Deutsche Rundschau*, XX (1879), 295.

CHAPTER XXII

AT THE CROSSROADS

WHILE the Convention of Potsdam was in process of formulation, the French armies were advancing into the heart of the Austrian monarchy. But in the midst of their temporarily irresistible progress the web of diplomacy was again taken up by the two governments, and the outlines of a new pattern are soon discernible. For Talleyrand as for Napoleon the resounding victory in Bavaria represented a success whose political exploitation they could not afford to neglect. The minister of the exterior, consistently an advocate of an eventual rapprochement with the court of Vienna, envisioned in the defeat of Austria the great opportunity for conciliating the interests of the two countries. "This is what I would do with the successes of the Emperor," he wrote to Hauterive on October 11, when the capture of the bulk of Mack's forces already appeared imminent. He would have Napoleon say to Archduke Charles on the day after a great victory that he had always wanted peace and would be glad to grant a generous one now. Venice would be independent, Swabia, always a subject of discord between Austria and Bavaria, would be divided among the Emperor's South German allies; in return Austria would receive the Danubian principalities. "On these conditions," the Emperor would say, "I will make peace with you and conclude an offensive and defensive alliance, and the whole idea of an alliance with Prussia can go to the devil." "This," ends Talleyrand with the sadness of premonition, "is my dream of the evening."

A dream it was to remain! But before it passed into oblivion it was to receive a more than momentary consideration from the master. Napoleon had indeed never been entirely unresponsive to the notion of an alliance with Austria based on the removal of the conflicting interests of the two states. Not that he

had been very encouraging when on the morrow of the Peace of Luneville he had been approached by Louis Cobenzl with suggestions for the renewal of the alliance of 1756. Austria at that period not only lacked the spirit of resignation he preferred to see in his allies, but had demonstrated during the negotiations at Luneville and thereafter at Paris how little she was disposed to renounce her predominance in Italy and Germany. The price of her alliance would have been nothing less than to put a term to the extension of French influence in the peninsula and to support her by no means modest pretensions in Germany. To an arrangement on this basis the First Consul had not the slightest inclination, but during one of his conferences with Cobenzl he seized the occasion to make a proposition which he claimed would prevent any further collision between France and Austria. The central feature of the plan was the indemnification of the Grand Duke of Tuscany by Venetia. In return Austria would receive Salzburg, Berchtesgaden, Passau, and a portion of Bavaria, as well as retaining for herself Istria and Dalmatia. France would then withdraw her troops from the Cisalpine and support the cause of Austria in Germany. All subject of dispute would thereby be eradicated: "It is only about Italy that we can come to blows."¹

In the opinion of at least one historian the proposition here outlined was really the conception of Talleyrand.² Certainly it is so completely in conformity with the political principles of the minister of the exterior that one is tempted to ascribe to him a plan which has about it so little of the "Napoleonic." The impetuous manner in which it was thrust upon Cobenzl and the vigor with which the First Consul returned to the charge lead one to suppose, however, that it was the child of one of those sudden inspirations which sprang so frequently from his fertile brain. Brought forward at a time when the state of the

¹ Cobenzl to Emperor Francis, May 19, 1801. S.-A., *FRANKREICH*, 262 (1801), V, fol. 48-63.

² Cf. P. Olden, *Talleyrand und Napoleon* (1927), p. 15. It is to be remarked that Olden is acquainted with the dispatch in question only through some excerpts in Fournier, *Gentz und Cobenzl*, p. 27.

Continent was still unsettled and when the death of Paul I had deprived him of the ability to continue to ignore the Danube monarchy, it may be regarded as a demonstration of his readiness to arrive at an accommodation with Austria. In return for an attitude of resignation in Italy she was to be compensated by concessions in Germany. That the opportunism of the First Consul was here in conformity with the settled convictions of the minister may be regarded as mere coincidence. The incident shows, however, that the First Consul was not fundamentally averse to the notion of an alliance with Austria predicated on the removal of the spheres of conflict.

By the time of the commencement of the war of the Third Coalition the relationship of France to Austria had undergone a profound alteration. Not only had French control in Italy been subject to a vast extension, but the personal relationship of Napoleon and the members of the Bonaparte family to the states of the peninsula had become an intimate and complicated one. In Germany France had made enormous strides on the road to hegemony. The influence of the court of Vienna among the secondary states had been all but wiped out, while her natural allies, the ecclesiastical princes and imperial knights, had been either entirely destroyed or sharply curtailed. The French Empire had to all intents and purposes acquired predominance in Italy and South Germany. But everything remained in doubt and instability until Austria could be brought to recognize the permanence of this situation. And this she could be made to do by two means only: by a defeat so overwhelming as to leave her no hope of further resistance against the hard logic of events, or by assuring to her a new and fruitful field of exploitation, to which she would be obliged to devote all her energies and in which she could find ample compensation for her great losses.

There was nothing essentially incompatible in these alternative courses. In fact, the inevitable resistance of Austria to so drastic a reorientation of her policies rendered the success of the latter inconceivable without some measure of the former.

This was in truth recognized even by Talleyrand, who appears to have opposed little resistance to the measures which contributed to the rupture with Austria in 1805. But from the very first he held in view the opportunity of an early approach to Austria as soon as a sufficiently impressive French victory should have produced in her a more pliable frame of mind. The goal at which he aimed is revealed with unprecedented frankness in the remarks he addressed to Lucchesini in a conference on the twelfth of August. Let Emperor Francis renounce Venetia and thus place himself beyond all contact with France. In return he will discover in the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia an ample and profitable indemnification. Thereby he will assume as regards Russia the rôle of protector of the Ottoman Empire, in the preservation of which Prussia as much as the rest of Europe is deeply interested.³

Lucchesini's judgment has been criticized for discerning in these communications the secret intentions of Napoleon.⁴ And yet it is an error to assume that the Emperor was a stranger to such thoughts in the period with which we here have to deal. It is again the invasion project that will furnish us the key to his policies even in those months which followed its abandonment. *For this renunciation was still only a temporary one!* The flotilla which had been left in such superb condition and under such excellent protection at Boulogne was not intended to rot in inactivity. The fiasco of Villeneuve's dash on the Channel was not accepted by his master as a final and conclusive fatality. Truly enough, a resounding victory upon the Continent was required to restore his shaken prestige, the tottering finances, the tranquillity of his allies. But there was nothing fixed and resolved in his conception of the ensuing settlement. Should Austria renounce the coalition, recognize at last his preëminence in Germany and Italy, and serve as the first bulwark against the advance of Russia, it would require little more to dispose

³ Lucchesini's report of August 12, 1805. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, I, no. 265.

⁴ "Die sicher weit davon entfernt waren." Olden, *Talleyrand und Napoleon*, p. 17.

him to the sort of arrangement that was outlined in Talleyrand's statesmanlike project.

Thus it was not in behalf of a hopeless cause that the minister of the exterior prepared his justly celebrated memorandum of October 17. Dispatched from Strasbourg on the very day that Mack was surrounded at Ulm, it crossed a communication of the Emperor announcing that triumph. Europe, commences Talleyrand, can count only four great powers, for Prussia is only the first among the states of the second rank. She has in the past been overrated because of the tendency to confound with the great Frederick the state upon which he shed the reflection of his glory. Among the great powers France finds herself at odds with her three fellows. Of England and Austria she is the natural rival; Russia she must consider her enemy as long as the Muscovites persist in meditating conquest of the Ottoman Empire. As long as Austria is not in a condition of open rivalry with Russia it will be easy for England to unite them both against France. To remove all spheres of conflict as between France and Austria, and to create such a one between the latter and Russia, is therefore the proper goal of French policy. Russia, her career arrested in the West by the barrier raised in the extension of the Danube monarchy, will divert to Asia her restless, expansive energy. There the natural course of events will bring her into collision with England, who henceforth will be deprived of all hope of gaining allies upon the Continent.

So fully had Talleyrand developed his ideas and so much were they a part of his customary thinking, that he was able to append to his memorandum a complete draft treaty in which the principles enunciated in the former found detailed application. Austria was to renounce the possession of Venetia, Tyrol, and of her territories in Swabia, receiving in return Moldavia, Wallachia, Bessarabia, and a portion of Bulgaria. The restored Venetian state was not to be annexed to the Kingdom of Italy, but was again to become an aristocratic republic. Napoleon on his part was to demonstrate his sincerity by disposing of the

crown of Italy and guaranteeing the new Austrian territories against a possible Russian attack.⁵

The dispatches from Strasbourg which contained Talleyrand's great memorandum were still in transit when Napoleon had occasion to give evidence of a disposition unusually receptive to the proposals of his minister. On October 20, namely, the day on which Mack surrendered at Ulm, he had an interview with the defeated Austrian in the abbey of Elchingen. The latter, after tenaciously defending his military measures and dwelling on the scarcely diminished resources of Austria, was declaiming on the futility of war, when the Emperor suddenly exclaimed: "Well then, let us make peace. I authorize you to tell Emperor Francis that I wish it. I will come to an agreement with him on very advantageous conditions." On Mack's objection that his master could not treat without the participation of his ally, he replied: "It is well. I will negotiate with both. Let them make known their conditions to me, for I am very anxious to know them. I am willing to make sacrifices, even great sacrifices, but let them finally make common cause with me against England and her dominion."⁶

It is the same note which is to be sounded so much more loudly later, the demand that is to be reiterated with such monotonous frequency through the years to come. It is to lead the eagles into every capital of Europe and for a time to conduct Napoleon to the mastery of the Continent. On the twentieth of October it was voiced again in an address to the Austrian generals as they gathered about him during the defile of their captive troops. "Sirs," the Emperor commenced, "the war your master is making on me is unjust. I tell you frankly, I do not know why I am fighting or what is wanted of me." The same words these as in Mack's report to his Emperor. And the same plea for peace mixed this time with menace:

⁵ Bertrand, *Lettres inédites de Talleyrand*, pp. 156-174.

⁶ From the report of Mack, dated Hütteldorf, Oct. 27, 1805. Largely verbatim in Beer, *Zehn Jahre oesterreichischer Politik*, pp. 158-160.

Once again I counsel my brother, the Emperor of Germany, let him hasten to make peace. This is the moment to remember that all empires have an end; the idea that the end of the dynasty of Lorraine may have arrived must frighten him. I wish peace upon the Continent. It is ships, colonies, commerce that I desire, and that is as advantageous to you as to us.⁷

At the very moment that these words, correctly or incorrectly reported, were being incorporated in the Ninth Bulletin the fleet of Villeneuve was staggering to its destruction off Cape Trafalgar. Thus at one tragic blow all the maritime projects of Napoleon had become meaningless dreams, a disaster which more than anything else will explain the departure of the Emperor from the views of Talleyrand in favor of an imperialistic continental policy.⁸ But nearly a month had still to intervene before news of the catastrophe could cast its influence upon his decisions. And in the meantime there arrived that memorandum which Talleyrand had composed between hope and pessimism at Strasbourg, while in its wake hurried the minister himself to join the Emperor at Munich. There, if we were to believe Talleyrand's own testimony, Napoleon, struck by the arguments of his minister, convened a special council at which he inclined to the plan proposed in the memorandum.⁹ Then, the memoirs of the aged prince continue, some advantages gained by his advance guard fired his imagination and he could think of nothing beyond marching on Vienna and issuing decrees from the imperial palace of Schönbrunn.

Fortunately there exists in Talleyrand's own hand evidence to contradict this invention of his malice. For on October 27 he transmitted to Hauterive the rough plan of a project, "the three quarters dictated by the Emperor," which, if the above council ever met, can only have been arrived at therein.¹⁰ And

⁷ 9^e Bulletin de la Grande Armée, Oct. 21, 1805. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9408.

⁸ Cf. Olden, *Napoleon und Talleyrand*, pp. 21-22.

⁹ Talleyrand, *Mémoires*, I, 296.

¹⁰ In view of the fact that Talleyrand only announced his departure from Strasbourg on the 24th (Bertrand, *Lettres inédites*, p. 178), he can hardly have

what is here set forth differs profoundly from the favorable consideration which Talleyrand claimed for his own plans.

No longer an emperor in Germany! Three emperors in Germany: France, Austria, and Prussia. The federative system of France centers in Bavaria, composed of Bavaria as she now is, with Eichstädt, the bishopric of Passau and all Tyrol — that is to say German Tyrol.

Venice and Italian Tyrol would go to the kingdom of Italy, while in the former, as well as in Germany, a series of feudal principalities was to be erected for the benefit of French dignitaries.

A treaty of alliance with Austria, by giving her Wallachia and Moldavia, as well as Bessarabia and Bulgaria, has been rejected, in spite of ten thousand good reasons. They prefer a treaty with Russia, after having weakened Austria: *that is not my opinion*, but mine has been rejected in this regard.¹¹

In clear, bold outlines is here sketched before us an imperial system rising amidst the ruins of Hapsburg hegemony in Germany and Italy. Our first reaction must be to conclude that we have reached the turning point in Napoleonic policy. It is impossible to escape an impression that the final, irrevocable decision has fallen. In spite of this the history of the weeks that

been in Munich before evening of the 26th. Thus the council (shall we not say "discussions") in question can have taken place no earlier than the morning of the 27th. Olden (*Talleyrand und Napoleon*, p. 19) neglects the consideration of this time element, when, in a frankly desperate effort to reconcile Talleyrand's story with the statements in his letter to Hauterive, he suggests the conceivability of two councils, the second of which reversed the decision of its predecessor. But, aside from the time that would have been necessary therefor, Talleyrand's communication to his subordinate gives throughout the impression that he had come up against a blank wall from the moment of his arrival in the Bavarian capital. It might also be remarked that the 27th was a very busy day for Napoleon. It being Sunday, he attended mass in the chapel of the electoral palace. He then dictated letters on a variety of subjects to his brother Joseph, Champagny, Fouché, and the King of Prussia. Murat's advance guard did not gain any successes or even come into renewed contact with the enemy until the 30th.

¹¹ A. F. Artaud de Montor, *Histoire de la vie et des travaux politiques du Comte d'Hauterive* (1839), pp. 119-121; G. Garden, *Histoire générale des traités de paix*, IX, 29-31. How disgusted Talleyrand was with this project is illustrated by his refusal to draft it in detail: "Voici un nouveau [plan de pacification] que je vous laisse à faire."

follow proves, almost beyond a doubt, that Napoleon remained standing at the crossroads. The immense project of invasion, the memory of which he could not shake off, continued to plague his imagination and prevented him from entirely rejecting the conceptions of his minister. As long as the descent remained in any way conceivable, a solution by which all conflicts of interest were removed as between him and Austria was within the realm of feasibility. Much, perhaps all, depended on the reception of his most recent overtures by the Hofburg.

Mack had left for Vienna, entirely convinced that the French emperor was earnestly desirous of peace, and hoping that his own blunders would be forgotten in the sensation which the proposals he was bearing would create. As Archduke Charles remarked, Napoleon proved his knowledge of men when he sent to the Austrian capital his defeated opponent, "a man who lost his head both in fortune and misfortune."¹² Then it was to him that Emperor Francis had confided at the moment of parting: "What do you think, perhaps he [Napoleon] will still negotiate? He will take position along the Neckar, rest his left flank on Würzburg and then negotiate."¹³ Napoleon could the more readily believe this, as there were other indications of a last-minute disposition on the part of the Austrian Emperor to arrive at an understanding. As recently as September 25 Count Manfredini, chief minister of the Elector of Salzburg, had remarked to the French agent Lezay: "Everything can still be arranged. Your Emperor desires to make Prince Eugene King of Italy; let him be it. The Emperor [Francis] has a well brought up and handsome daughter; let him marry her; all is easily arranged."¹⁴

But if Napoleon had hoped that the court of Vienna would enter immediately upon his overtures, he was to be rudely undeceived by a letter from the Austrian Emperor which arrived on the second of November. Far from demonstrating an inclina-

¹² Wertheimer, *Geschichte Oesterreichs*, I, 306.

¹³ As Mack states in his report to his own government that he repeated the above to Napoleon on his word of honor, there can hardly be any question of his reliability in this matter.

¹⁴ Report of Lezay, Sept. 25, 1805. A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 27, fol. 117.

tion toward a separate accord, Francis coolly referred to the approaching arrival of the Emperor Alexander, and emphasized that any measures leading to the conclusion of peace would have to be concerted with his ally.¹⁵ And still Napoleon was not prepared to sever completely the thread that ran to Vienna. The epistle which he now addressed in reply to the above is, in fact, evidence of the degree to which he was receptive to the arguments of Talleyrand. Without attempting to hide his annoyance that Francis should "make peace depend upon another power," he proceeds in almost the very language of the memorandum:

It is imperative that there should be no further subject of division between us. . . . This is the means of finally recalling to Your Majesty, if that is possible, the true conception that his natural enemy is not France, who has nothing to envy him for.

My ambition is concentrated wholly on the re-establishment of my commerce and my marine, and England oppresses the one as the other.¹⁶

There was little enough in this to attract the Austrians. Napoleon had been frank enough in saying that a lasting peace was not possible unless they agreed to renounce not only their own pretensions in Germany and Italy, but everything among their own possessions which could conceivably become of interest to French eyes. In return for these sacrifices there was not even a suggestion of compensation; there exists no evidence of any kind to indicate that Napoleon ever seriously considered this essential feature of Talleyrand's project. At the same time Francis and his ministers now thought it possible to further their own special plans by appearing to enter upon the overtures of the French Emperor. If Napoleon could be induced to consent to an armistice, Austria would have leisure to reorganize her shattered battalions, while Kutusov's Russians would be enabled to extricate themselves from their now overly advanced position. So Count Giulay was sent to the French headquarters at St. Polten, the bearer of a letter which authorized him to re-

¹⁵ Oct. 30, 1805. F. Kirchseisen, *Fürstenbriefe an Napoleon I* (1929), I, 12-13.

¹⁶ Nov. 3. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9451.

ceive more particular proposals and to arrange a suspension of hostilities.¹⁷ It would appear that Napoleon considered the collapse of Austria to be imminent, for the terms which he now suggested revealed his entire program with amazing frankness. Like a man who is conscious of holding all the trumps and does not wish to play the game to the bitter end, he laid his cards upon the table. Austria is to renounce Venetia to the Kingdom of Italy and her Swabian territories to his German allies. He in his turn will separate the crowns of France and Italy and evacuate Naples and Holland. On this basis, and on that of the Treaty of Amiens, England and Russia can be included in the general pacification.

One cannot avoid being struck by the close resemblance of this project to what the three powers of the Potsdam Convention had just declared to be the requisites of a durable peace. There also the separation of the Napoleonic crowns and the liberation of Holland and Naples had been the points most emphasized. The essential differences lay in the territorial sacrifices demanded of Austria, which Napoleon, quite aside from general political considerations, believed as absolutely essential to his prestige.¹⁸ The inevitable consequence was that the Hofburg had no stomach for what was, generally speaking, a peace of moderation. Moreover, it had now received the news of the Convention of Potsdam; every day of delay therefore brought Prussian intervention that much nearer. On November 6 Metternich had exulted from Berlin: "The treaty is signed, its stipulations are clear, and all the tortuosity and astuteness of the policy of Haugwitz cannot save Prussia from an active coöperation if we can gain four weeks."¹⁹

So Giulay went back to St. Polten with nothing more than renewed pleas for an armistice on the basis of the military

¹⁷ Francis to Napoleon, Nov. 5. A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 27, fol. 160-161; Kircheisen, *Fürstenbriefe*, I, 12-13.

¹⁸ This aspect of the problem is subjected to detailed analysis by Hans Olden in a chapter on "Der Kaiser und das französische Volk." *Napoleon und Talleyrand*, pp. 81-102.

¹⁹ To Colloredo. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Nov.), fol. 81-82.

status quo. Napoleon, of course, did not need much insight to gage the true value of these appeals to "avoid unnecessary bloodshed." He refused to go beyond a promise to halt his advance at Brunn if the Russian forces would evacuate the Austrian dominions. When Giulay urged the acceptance of Prussia's mediation, the Emperor was seized with anger and declared vehemently that war would follow if the court of Berlin meddled in his affairs. He would consider only the most direct negotiations, and proposed that Francis should meet him personally at the outposts.

It is not inconceivable that the history of Europe would have been profoundly affected if Francis had agreed to meet Napoleon then, instead of only after the battle of Austerlitz. Now, if ever, would the French emperor have broached the subject of eastern expansion for Austria. That such might have been the case is at least indicated by an incident of this very period, the character of which has never been adequately illuminated. We are concerned with an interview which took place at Vienna between Prince Murat and the Chevalier de Landriani, a member of the household of Duke Albert of Saxe-Teschen. Their informal and more or less accidental encounter in the Austrian capital was utilized by the Emperor's brother-in-law for the development of a vigorous argument in favor of an immediate peace. Napoleon, said Murat, who talked at full speed for an hour, had not the slightest intention of destroying Austria. Yes, he was even prepared to ally himself with the court of Vienna. Everything could easily be arranged in a quarter of an hour's interview between the two sovereigns. France and Austria had the same interests in the East, which Russia was anxious to monopolize. Landriani should convey these remarks to the leaders of the Austrian government, particularly Cobenzl; everything he (the Marshal) said was with the full knowledge of Napoleon.²⁰

On the seventeenth Napoleon made his last personal assault

²⁰ Landriani to Cobenzl, Nov. 15, 1805. Quoted by Beer, *Zehn Jahre oesterreichischer Politik*, p. 191.

upon the Austrian ruler. Once more he offered to arrest his advance at Brünn if Francis would divest himself of the Russians, whose depredations in the Austrian dominions he denounced as those of uncivilized barbarians.²¹ The letter climaxed in the threat that at the first entry of new Russian armies, "*je me tiendrais dégagé de toute traité.*"²² Two days before Napoleon had confided to Joseph: "The Emperor of Germany writes me the most beautiful letters in the world, but he has allowed me to occupy his capital and has not yet thrown off the influence of the Russians. He must at present be with the Emperor Alexander, but one day or another he will have to decide [for an alliance with France?]." ²³

Within a few hours of the dispatch of his letter to the Austrian sovereign, Napoleon had in his hands a brief note which Talleyrand had penned on the thirteenth. With a cryptic compliment, "Genius and good fortune were in Germany," the minister transmitted to him the tidings of the tragic destruction of Villeneuve's fleet at Trafalgar.²⁴ To Hauterive he expressed himself in very different terms: "What news more horrible than that from Cadiz! If it only does not hinder any of the political operations which now appear suitable to me!"²⁵ Talleyrand saw with prophetic insight the fatal effect of this turn of events upon the system he had been advocating. His dream of the conquest of England by direct means snatched from before his eyes, Napoleon could substitute for it only that of the mastery of the Continent. No longer are the bulletins of the Grand Army or the communications to his fellow-sovereigns to proclaim that he is interested solely in the sea and in colonies. Against England there remained only the negative weapon of a continental blockade, and for this the French position on the Continent must be

²¹ That there was a foundation for such claims can be deduced from a contemporary letter from the English ambassador to his mother: "I don't know which is the most feared [at Vienna], the arrival of the Russians, or their retreat, or that of the French." Nov. 3. *Paget Papers*, II, 239.

²² *Corr.*, XI, no. 9503.

²³ Lecestre, *Lettres inédites de Napoléon Ier*, I, no. 97.

²⁴ Bertland, *Lettres inédites*, p. 185.

²⁵ Lacour-Gayet, *Talleyrand*, II, 165.

ruthlessly built up into a hegemony. The alliance with Russia, already envisioned in the discussions of October 27, henceforth became a necessity. And the rôle of Austria changed proportionately from that envisioned in Talleyrand's memorandum.

Not that Napoleon ceased to attempt a separate arrangement with Austria, but it became henceforth simply an element in his efforts to divide the allies and defeat them in detail, be it by military or diplomatic means. Angered by the lack of response to his successive overtures, he had already devoted considerable effort to sow dissension among the members of the coalition. For this purpose he found it convenient to make use of the influence of the South German princes. Maximilian Joseph was urged to induce his wife to write to her sister, the Tsaritsa, but the Elector knew too well the slight regard of Alexander for Bavarian aggrandizement and feared that the letter might be returned unopened. Failing in this quarter, the Emperor sent a note to Frederick of Württemberg, requesting that worthy to send someone to his sister, the Empress Dowager, to implore her to promote the welfare of her House by persuading her son to cut loose from Austria.²⁶ This idea appealed so much to the Elector that he dispatched Count Truchsess von Waldburg with letters for Alexander and Marie Feodorovna, but his efforts do not appear to have borne any fruit. At Berlin the French and Bavarian envoys were careful to spread the news of the overtures made by Napoleon to Mack, but Metternich expressed the opinion that these tactics had only operated to drive Prussia to the conclusion of the Convention of Potsdam, in order to prevent Austria from concluding a separate peace.²⁷ Yet they were at the same time effective in keeping alive the suspicions and apprehensions of the Prussian statesmen. Thus Montgelas succeeded in convincing Schlöden that Francis was about to make a

²⁶ Nov. 16. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9606.

²⁷ "La langue pacifique des missions françois et bavaoise, et le sein qu'elles ont de répondu que nous sommes en pleine négociation de préciser les ouvertures que le General Mack auroit été chargé de faire, ont peut-être plus contribué à l'accession de la Prusse, que toute autre considération." To Colloredo, Nov. 6, 1805. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Nov.), fol. 212-213.

bargain with Napoleon by which both would fall on Prussia, and there can be no doubt but that at times such an arrangement entered into the Emperor's views. At one time a French agent at Berlin had approached Metternich and insinuated that Napoleon was not at all hostile to Austria, though very much so to Prussia; that if Austria would make peace, not only would she be accorded more than she had been granted at Luneville, but the Elector of Bavaria and the other allies of France would be compensated for their sacrifices elsewhere (that is, with Prussian territories in South Germany).²⁸

Napoleon's most recent letter and the overbearing conduct of the Russians may have served to incline Francis and his ministers to consider reasonable terms. Count Stadion, one of the best known of the Austrian diplomats, now accompanied Giulay to the French camp, and for the first time definite conditions were offered to the French Emperor. The separation of the crowns of France and Italy was to be demanded, as well as the restoration of the King of Sardinia to his former possessions. The plenipotentiaries were not to consider any project the basis of which was the cession of Venetia, but they were to conduct themselves in such a manner that their refusal would not entail the rupture of the negotiations. Finally, the envoys were expressly instructed to coöperate with Count Haugwitz, it being feared that otherwise Prussia might seek to withdraw from her engagements.²⁹

The commissioners arrived at Brünn in the evening of November 24. At nine o'clock the next morning Giulay was summoned to the Emperor's headquarters. Napoleon assured him that peace was his fervent desire and cited the fact that he had not levied contributions on Vienna as a proof of his conviction that it was not far off. He refused to consider the terms offered

²⁸ Metternich to Colloredo, Nov. 18. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Nov.), fol. 81-82.

²⁹ The instructions to Stadion read: "M. le Comte de Stadion ira du meilleur accord avec M. le Comte de Haugwitz et cherchera de lier sa négociation à celle de ce Ministre, pour éviter que la Cour de Berlin ne puisse se prétendre dégagée des ses derniers engagements au cas que la paix n'ait pas lieu." Beer, *Zehn Jahre oesterreichischer Politik*, p. 192.

(which indeed only an allied victory would have justified), and proposed others which followed the lines of those he had previously suggested. That they represented his real views was realized by Giulay, when he wrote to Cobenzl: "It seems that the chances of war alone can give us any hope of less onerous conditions."³⁰

Soon after leaving Napoleon, Giulay was called in to see Murat, who asked him immediately whether he was satisfied with the Emperor. On the envoy's saying that he considered the terms offered by His Majesty too hard, the Marshal protested that he had tried his best to persuade his brother-in-law to soften them, but that Napoleon was absolutely determined to get Venice, where he desired to use the domain lands for gratifications to those of his generals and colonels who were not favored by fortune. When the Austrian remarked that this could be done in a much more simple way by direct money payments, Murat said that the Emperor would not rest until he had acquired all of Italy, which he regarded as a mistress whom he wanted for himself alone, that as long as he had Milan and the Emperor of Austria had Venice, the peninsula would be a continual subject of discord, which could be avoided only if the complete control passed to France. The Marshal went so far as to hint at a possible compensation for Austria in Germany. Similar views were expressed by Berthier in a brief interview immediately after.

At one o'clock in the afternoon both the envoys were invited to another conference with the Emperor. Napoleon impugned the reliability of the Russians and repeated his charges regarding their barbarous conduct. After insisting on the cession of Venice, he asked whether Austria would prefer to give up Tyrol instead. The envoys bluntly declared that their master was not inclined to cede anything. Perhaps, he then inferred, there might be an advantageous indemnity in Germany, such as Salzburg, Regensburg, territories of the immediate nobility, maybe even Hanover. When the question of Prussian mediation was

³⁰ Nov. 29. A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 27, no. 68.

brought up, he again gave way to irritation, stating that if necessary he could fight her with the rest. Finally, he referred the negotiators to Talleyrand at Vienna, being anxious that they should not meet Haugwitz, whom he expected the next day.³¹ He had not had much luck in sounding the dispositions and intentions of the Austrians, who seemed to have held their own very well throughout the negotiations.³² Their encounter with the minister of the exterior in the Austrian capital was to be a sham battle — the last important diplomatic action preliminary to the denouement at Austerlitz remained to be fought at Brunn.

³¹ To Talleyrand, Nov. 25 *Corr.*, XI, no. 9523.

³² The above account of these negotiations is in the main based on the report of the Austrian plenipotentiaries to their government, which was intercepted by the French. *A.E., AUTRICHE*, supplément 27, no. 29.

CHAPTER XXIII

NAPOLEON AND COUNT HAUGWITZ

THE Treaty of Potsdam had barely been signed when a new division among the Prussian leaders became evident. Hardenberg, Baron vom Stein, General Rüchel, and Prince Louis Ferdinand favored a speedy declaration of war, while the King, Haugwitz, and the Cabinet Councilors Lombard and Beyme believed that the proposed mediation still offered some possibility of peace. It had been with a heavy heart that Frederick William agreed to the treaty, remarking to Count Hoym shortly afterwards: "I have signed, but my mind is in the greatest unrest and I tremble for the consequences."¹

But it was not alone the King's vacillation which rendered the foreign policy of Prussia feeble and irresolute at this critical juncture. The inefficiency of the organization of the foreign department was a decisive factor. Hardenberg's inconsistency and imprudence during the two previous months had so greatly disturbed Frederick William, that he now called in Haugwitz and gave him a position coördinate with the other minister's. A division of work was arranged between them, even extending to the communication with the foreign envoys. Haugwitz earnestly endeavored to coöperate in every possible way with his colleague, but the fact that they disagreed on many important matters made perfect union of action impossible. Hardenberg protested against the "lack of trust" shown him by the King and pointed to the confusion which would be inevitable if the official voice of Prussia were not known. That Haugwitz was personally disinterested can be inferred from the fact that he was sufficiently generous to second these arguments and to offer to retire. The King, however, refused to grant him the required permission, and the cabinet coterie begged him not to "forsake his sov-

¹ Hardenberg, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, I, 536.

ereign." Hardenberg received the formal assurance of Frederick William's complete confidence, and up to the departure of Haugwitz for the camp of Napoleon the division of responsibility remained to distress all parties concerned.²

Several other factors served to put a damper on the war spirit of the Prussian leaders. The English were willing enough to grant a subsidy, and their ambassador, Francis Jackson, had offered pecuniary assistance as early as September 20.³ But when Lord Harrowby, their special envoy, arrived at Berlin on November 16, having made one of the slowest journeys from London on record, it was soon discovered that the views of the two courts concerning the amount necessary were far from the same. The British negotiator was infirm and irritable, and much of the time he was entirely incapacitated.⁴ When Metternich informed him in confidence of the secret article concerning Hanover, he was completely prostrated.⁵ His instructions were silent on the point, but he knew very well what the reaction of George III would be. In despair he inquired of Pitt as to whether there was not some chance of prevailing upon the King to consider at least the rectification of Prussia's military frontier.⁶ But soon a dispatch arrived from Lord Mulgrave, which instructed him not only to avoid all mention of the electorate, but to declare, if he was forced to do so, that any arrangement in which Hano-

² Hardenberg, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, I, 530-531.

³ Jackson to Paget, Sept. 20. *Paget Papers*, II, 217.

⁴ "Lord Harrowby is really an object of pity to everybody who sees him, and surprise has been expressed that a man so thoroughly hors de combat should have been selected by our Government at a critical moment like this for its special negotiator. . . . He has had three fits since he came, and has suffered agonies the whole time; often, as he told Francis, he has been insensible for hours together. He is naturally of an irritable temper, which added to his bodily suffering, renders it both unpleasant and painful to transact business with him, during these short intervals in which he is at all capable of attending to it." Letter of George Jackson, Dec. 2, 1805. Jackson, *Diaries and Letters*, I, 377. Hardly less severe is the judgment of Hardenberg, who describes him as "un überaus langsamer und unentschlossener Negociateur." *Denkwürdigkeiten*, II, 352.

⁵ Reports of Metternich, Nov. 22 and 23. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Nov.), fol. 88-120.

⁶ Nov. 24. Quoted by J. H. Rose, *William Pitt and the Great War* (1911), p. 545.

ver was alienated from her legitimate sovereign was "utterly inadmissible."⁷ In consequence the negotiations between Harrowby and Hardenberg soon arrived at an impasse, and nothing had been settled when the day of Austerlitz decided the fate of the coalition.

Napoleon was still before Ulm when the news of the turn of events at Berlin reached him. Otto forwarded the dispatches of Duroc and Laforest from Würzburg and added information he had received himself from the Elector, whose representative at Berlin, De Bray, was doing all in his power to calm the Prussians.⁸ The Emperor could not bring himself to believe that Frederick William and his ministers would have the courage and decision to move against him, and when Mack had hinted that the court of Berlin would now join the coalition, he had exclaimed: "Ah! the Prussians do not declare themselves so swiftly."⁹ But he was undeceived when he arrived at Munich, where the definite information awaited him that the King had opened his territories to the Russians and was proceeding to occupy Hanover without troubling to ask his leave. There can be no question but that Napoleon was honestly offended and that he never forgave Prussia for what he regarded as a stab in the back. The violation of Ansbach seemed to him no more than a pretext by which she had rid herself of her promise never to join a combination hostile to France. He thundered against her before Murat and Gravenreuth, saying that he preferred the conduct of Francis II, that if the garrison of Hameln were forced to capitulate he would reconquer Hanover himself, and that Frederick William should have sent an aide-de-camp, in which case he would have been glad to put Hanover into his hands for the duration of the war.¹⁰

However aroused the Emperor may have been, he realized the necessity of doing everything possible to prevent the ad-

⁷ Nov. 23. J. H. Rose, *Formation of the Third Coalition*, no. 108.

⁸ Duroc to Otto, 18 vendémiaire; Otto to Napoleon, 21 vendémiaire an XIV (Oct. 10 and 13, 1805); A.E., *BAVIÈRE*, supplément 11, nos. 130, 135.

⁹ Beer, *Zehn Jahre österreichischer Politik*, p. 159.

¹⁰ Bitterauf, *Geschichte des Rheinbundes*, pp. 205-206.

herence of Prussia to the coalition. He suggested that Maximilian Joseph write a warning note to the King, expressing the opinion that Prussia would never get Hanover if Napoleon were offended, and informing him in confidence of the probability of Austria's accepting offers made through General Mack. But the Elector had been left without a reply to an earlier communication, and De Bray's offers of satisfaction for the passage of the Bavarians through Ansbach had been rudely rejected.¹¹ Duroc was now ordered to rejoin the Emperor and was provided with exact instructions as to what he was to say to the King on taking leave. He was told to emphasize his master's affection for and interest in Prussia, his ardent desire to remain at peace with her, and his ability to avenge any insult offered to France.¹² Duroc's words were reinforced by a personal letter to the King, which, although by no means free from menace, struck an entirely different note from that of October 5. In it Napoleon voiced his keen regret that his previous communication had not been satisfactory. He repeated his justifications for the passage through Ansbach in a much more moderate tone, and stated he had no idea that the question might cause difficulty until after the Elector of Bavaria had voiced his apprehensions. He expressed his readiness to give any satisfaction desired and the willingness to contribute to the territorial aggrandizement of Prussia. A warning against Russian ambitions was sounded. Finally, Napoleon repeated his assurances of friendship and implored the King to make the preservation of peace possible.¹³ It was the very style of argument most calculated to induce Frederick William to hesitate and wonder whether he had not gone too far.

To understand the tragicomic fiasco of Haugwitz's mission to Napoleon, it is necessary to comprehend its objectives when

¹¹ The Bavarian troops had in fact been much less considerate than the French. Thus Metternich to Colloredo on October 12: "Les Bavaarois s'y permettent plus d'excès que les français même. Les premiers les ont poussés jusqu'à forcer les greniers et magasins royaux, pour en enlever les grains." S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Oct.), fol. 65.

¹² Oct. 24. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9420.

¹³ Oct. 27. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9434.

the minister left Berlin. It is scarcely conceivable that the King could have contemplated a sweeping repudiation of the Treaty of Potsdam — that would have meant war with the coalition. The fact that Haugwitz later told Laforest that the King had given him oral private instructions to the effect that peace between France and Prussia was to be preserved at all cost means very little, for this statement was made some time after the signature of the Treaty of Schönbrunn, when the Prussians had good reasons for proving that they had at no time really harbored hostile intentions against Napoleon.¹⁴ On the other hand, it is probable enough that Frederick William did express his fervent hope that war would not result from Haugwitz's mission. It was in a similar vein that he had spoken to Duroc, when the Grand Marshal had taken leave to rejoin his master, stating that he earnestly desired to maintain his system of neutrality.¹⁵ As far as Haugwitz's instructions were concerned, he was probably given to understand that any reasonable proposals made by Napoleon were to be considered, even if they were not in accord with the exact terms of the Treaty of Potsdam.

Haugwitz has often been blamed for his delay in setting out upon his journey and for his subsequent slow progress, both of which were undoubtedly deliberate. It is in regard to this phase of his conduct, however, that he is really most easily vindicated. If the Prussian army was unprepared to enter the war before the middle of December, it would have been dangerous to allow oneself to become involved before that date. This was pointed out by the Duke of Brunswick in a memorandum to the King. The Duke was especially disturbed by the French occupation of Tyrol, on the retention of which he had based his original plan of operations. He advised that the negotiations be extended, so that it would be possible to prevent their arriving at a climax before December 15, arguing

¹⁴ Laforest to Talleyrand, Jan. 9, 1806. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 326.

¹⁵ Duroc wrote to Talleyrand on November 7 that the King had assured him "... qu'il ne voulait pas s'écarter de son système de neutralité et travailler constamment à la paix." Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, lxxv.

that if the envoy arrived at the French headquarters too early it would be best to listen to Napoleon's terms. Haugwitz might then return to Berlin, and Frederick William would know what to do, while Napoleon would still be in the dark as to the course of action Prussia would adopt. The flaw in this plan lay in the fact that it precluded the possibility of an ultimatum and left the Prussian policy as weak and irresolute in appearance as ever. Nevertheless, it was accepted by the King, and Haugwitz certainly carried it out to the best of his ability.¹⁶

Haugwitz left Berlin on November 14 and proceeded in so leisurely a manner that six days later he had only reached Prague. There he became apprehensive of a French invasion of Silesia and advised the King to collect his troops on the right bank of the Elbe.¹⁷ The Tsar sent Novosiltzov to urge him to hurry, describing it as necessary to revive the courage of the Austrians, who seemed to have marked leanings toward peace. This ominous intelligence induced the minister to hesitate more than ever, for he now had visions of Napoleon making peace with Austria in order to crush Prussia in coöperation with her.¹⁸ The terms of the ultimatum which had been agreed upon at Potsdam did not appear to be applicable any

¹⁶ Hardenberg (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, II, 316) claims that Brunswick's plan of campaign was intended to circumvent the obligations to the allies and to avoid war: "Es ist mir kein Zweifel übrig, dass der Graf von Haugwitz auch den Herzog von Braunschweig, der so gern der Hoffluft folgte und der Intrigue vor der Offenheit und Biederkeit den Vorzug gab, in seine Ideen mit hineingezogen hat." Hardenberg then maintains that Brunswick had "gegen die Wahrheit" claimed that it would take four or five weeks to get the army ready (II, 333). It is true enough that the Prussians were habitually dilatory, but it is significant that Crenneville, the Austrian representative on the military committee, declared that Austria would not be able to resume active operations before December 16, and he writes home on December 3: "Il ne m'a pas paru devoir insister trop fortement pour accélérer la marche des troupes prussiennes par des marches forcés." He also speaks of the good spirit of the King and the generals. To Louis Cobenzl. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Dec.), fol. 9-10.

¹⁷ Haugwitz's report of Nov. 20. Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 307.

¹⁸ "L'Autriche a le plus grand besoin de la paix et ne demande que la paix. . . Je sais, à n'en pouvoir douter, qu'au moment, Sire, où l'Empereur Napoléon vous comptera au nombre de ses ennemis, il ferait un pont d'or à l'Autriche. Elle n'ay résistera pas, et vous aurez dès lors sur les bras toute la puissance française réunie aux Bavares. . ." Haugwitz's report of Dec. 2. *Ibid.*, II, no. 311.

longer, and Haugwitz decided that he would have to feel his way by the renewal of the offer of mediation which had been made in the spring. His mental depression did not serve to accelerate his journey, which was further retarded by the movements of the armies and the difficulty of knowing the exact whereabouts of Napoleon. This gave rise to Talleyrand's famed witticism: "The march of Haugwitz resembles that of the policy of his cabinet."

For weeks Napoleon had been anxiously seeking to penetrate the secret of Prussia's political system. By the time he was ready to receive Haugwitz, he had evidently decided that none such existed and that her policy depended upon the calculations of the moment. On November 15 Emperor Francis had issued a proclamation to his people in which he had announced his inability to accept the terms offered him by Napoleon, and declared that there was nothing left for him to do but to unite his forces with those of his *allies*, the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, until France had been brought to moderation.¹⁹ This seemed to confirm the general report that some kind of arrangement had been arrived at during the Tsar's visit at Berlin. "The news from Berlin continues to be disturbing," Otto wrote Talleyrand on the day before the battle of Austerlitz, "but one speaks with esteem of Count Haugwitz and it is held that he will be easy to gain by careful treatment."²⁰ In answer to a note of Talleyrand's in which the minister announced the departure of Haugwitz from Berlin and inquired as to whether he should be detained at Vienna or sent on to Brünn,²¹ the Emperor ordered him to use every means in his power to fathom the envoy's intentions. To give Prussia the opportunity of backing down with good grace if she regretted her hasty action in joining the coalition, Talleyrand was to express the Emperor's conviction that she had only decided on the occupation of Hanover to prevent the invasion of the Russians and Swedes. His tone was to be dig-

¹⁹ A.E., AUTRICHE, 377, fol. 478-481.

²⁰ A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 230.

²¹ Nov. 20. Bertrand, *Lettres inédites*, p. 189.

nified, confident, and at times menacing.²² By the dispatches of Giulay and Stadion, which Napoleon had already begun to intercept, he knew that the two German powers were by no means in perfect accord and that the Austrians looked forward with dread to the coming interview between himself and the Prussian envoy. By ignoring her relation to Russia and playing off Austria against her, he might intimidate Prussia and prevent her coöperation with the allies. The first move had been to have Haugwitz detained at Iglau while the Austrian plenipotentiaries were being expedited to Vienna. When they were safely out of the way, the hour had come for the famous interview.

That Count Haugwitz was in a frame of mind in which Napoleon's personality could and would make a profound impression upon him speaks from his correspondence at the time. Experienced diplomatist that he was, he still looked forward with much emotion to the prospect of meeting the man who had been able to rearrange the political structure of centuries.²³ The Emperor received him with icy coldness, and in revealing to him the Austrian proposals for an armistice indicated that he would make a separate peace if Prussia should threaten him. He demanded whether it was true that there had been a convention signed at Potsdam on November 3. This the envoy admitted, but when Napoleon asked for a copy, he said that he did not have one with him, which happened to be true, for he had diligently burned all his papers before leaving Prague. So great was his confusion, he would not do more than declare his government's pacific intentions and offer its impartial mediation. The Emperor interrupted him, saying that Prussia was not privileged to offer her mediation, as she was already in league with the allies.

²² The urgency and repetitions of Napoleon's injunctions to penetrate the designs of Prussia illustrate his extreme anxiety, his appreciation that his position would become desperate if she were added to the number of his enemies. Nov. 22. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9516.

²³ On November 17 Haugwitz had said to Count Hoym: "Je vous l'avoue franchement, j'éprouve déjà en idée une extrême satisfaction de voir de près un des hommes, comme, selon moi, il n'y en a plus." Bailleu, "Haugwitz und Hardenberg," *Deutsche Rundschau*, XX, 295.

In speaking of the peace he was willing to conclude Napoleon did not say a word about Italy, though referring to the Austrian possessions in Swabia as probable cessions to his allies. At this the Prussian remarked that his government desired a peace in which Austria did not lose anything. The Emperor finally indicated that he would accept the mediation and an armistice if Prussia agreed to supply the French garrison in the fortress of Hameln with provisions and to prevent the allies from making an attack upon Holland from North Germany. Haugwitz expressed his confidence that an agreement on this basis was possible and retired to his lodgings. Hardly ten minutes later General Caulaincourt arrived in haste and, announcing that a battle was imminent, requested him to enter a carriage destined to carry him to Talleyrand at Vienna.²⁴

Napoleon, although saying that his opponent had shown much finesse, expressed his confidence that he had formed a correct judgment of the situation. He had at last decided that Prussia was uncertain in regard to the policy she should pursue, and he conceived it his task to prolong her hesitation as long as possible.²⁵ His purpose had probably been to carry on three separate negotiations, one with Haugwitz at Brünn, one between Talleyrand and the Austrians at Vienna, and a third directly with Alexander. On receiving news of the military situation, however, he apparently decided that it was better to take the risk of submitting the Prussian to the contaminating influence of Stadion and Giulay at Vienna than to let him see too much of what was going on in Moravia.²⁶ The burden of making counterproposals or presenting their ultimatum had now been placed upon the Prussians. To strike down the allies while Prussia was still hesitating constituted his one great chance of victory.

²⁴ Stadion's account of a conversation with Haugwitz, Nov. 30 (intercepted). A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 27, no. 101.

²⁵ "J'ai conservé l'idée, tant de la lettre que de son discours, qu'on était incertain à Berlin sur le parti à prendre." To Talleyrand, Nov. 30. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9532.

²⁶ Such at least was the conviction of Haugwitz as he expressed it in his conversation with Stadion on November 30. A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 27, no. 101.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE DENOUEMENT: AUSTERLITZ

IN THE closing days of November both the diplomatic and the military contest between Napoleon and the Third Coalition were approaching their climax. At first glance the position of the Emperor of the French might indeed seem a desperate one. With barely fifty thousand men under his immediate command he was facing an enemy who was over half again as strong. An equally superior army under Archduke Charles was coming up in forced marches from Hungary and would soon threaten his right flank, while Archduke Ferdinand was engaged in raising Bohemia on his left. If the Prussians allowed the Russians, English, and Swedes to cross the lower Elbe and advance into Holland and Belgium, while they themselves entered Bohemia with one army and occupied the road to Linz with another, everything would be lost. It is hardly conceivable that even the genius of a Napoleon could have prevented the capture or destruction of his armies in such an eventuality. One must agree with Driault that even a French victory in Moravia would then have been but a phase of the campaign.¹ Yet in the uncertain state of Prussian policy such a victory would probably decide the wavering court to recede from its momentarily forward position. As Madame Lucchesini told a Parisian friend, Prussia would probably incline to the side which was able to win battles.² It was thus Napoleon's interest, nay his salvation, to tempt the allies to a decisive battle, while it would be madness for them to engage in it.³

¹ Driault, *Napoléon et l'Europe: Austerlitz*, p. 264.

² Bulletin of October 23 of the Ministry of Police. Aulard, *Paris sous le premier Empire*, II, 262.

³ Czartoryski wrote to Alexander the following April: "Bonaparte était intéressé à ne pas perdre de temps, et nous l'étions à en gagner. Il avait tous les

In the third week of November Alexander was being swayed by a gloomy pessimism. The bad condition of the few Austrian troops available and the failure to prevent the fall of Vienna had had a dampening effect upon his spirits. On November 14 he wrote to Frederick William, picturing affairs in an alarming state, describing his own resources as insufficient, and declaring that the fate of Europe lay in his friend's hand. Scarcely a week later this was followed by an even more dismal letter. "Our position is more than critical," lamented the Tsar, "we are absolutely alone against the French, and they are continually pressing us. . . . As for the Austrian army, it does not exist." Such an epistle could hardly serve to kindle much enthusiasm in the breast of the timid Prussian monarch. His answer, however, did not lack in assurances of zeal and in promises to attack the French in Franconia when everything was ready. Moreover, he gave his word that the negotiations of Haugwitz, whatever course they might take, would not delay or hinder his preparations.⁴

When this reply reached Alexander, that impressionistic prince's disposition had already undergone a complete metamorphosis. The Tsar's feelings had begun to take on an optimistic character when he received news of the advantage which Kutusov had gained over Mortier in the defile of Direnstein. When the corps of Buxhoevden and the Russian Imperial Guards arrived on November 24, his hesitation underwent a transition to confidence, and a review of the splendid troops of the latter served to kindle this into enthusiasm. Alexander began to dream of matching his imperial generalship against that of the Corsican, and the glory of a victory would be enhanced if the French could be defeated before the arrival of the Prussians, the Russian army of Bennigsen, and especially the Austrian forces of Archduke Charles. Thus he was in the exact

raisons pour risquer une bataille et nous pour l'éviter." É. Bourgeois, *Manuel historique de politique étrangère*, II, 259.

⁴ Letters of Alexander to Frederick William of Nov. 14 and 19; of Frederick William to Alexander of Nov. 23 and 27. Bailleu, *Briefwechsel*, nos. 78, 79, 81, 82.

mood to permit the tactics which Napoleon now employed to achieve the effect anticipated.

On November 25 Napoleon had dispatched his aide-de-camp Savary with a polite letter to the Tsar, complimenting him upon his arrival at his army.⁵ The latter's vanity must have been flattered, but he felt that his dignity demanded a cold front. His answer was addressed to "the head of the French government" and expressed in formal terms his desire for peace.⁶ On receipt of this message, Napoleon sent Savary back with a request for a personal interview. This the Tsar refused to grant, but he returned the politeness by dispatching Prince Dolgoruki to the French camp. As the Emperor did not desire to allow the Russian to make a survey of the situation within his lines, he rode to meet him at the outposts. Few French soldiers were about, everything being calculated to impress the Prince with the weakness of the army.

The accounts of this interview are so varied and contradictory that it is impossible to give full credence to any one of them. Most agree that Dolgoruki conducted himself with scarcely veiled insolence, failing to address Napoleon as a sovereign and naming extravagant conditions on which the French army "would be allowed to escape." De Ségur states that Belgium, the left bank of the Rhine, and Italy were to be separated from France under these terms.⁷ Certainly the conversation ended in considerable heat. Whichever version may be correct, there is no doubt but that Napoleon succeeded in convincing Dolgoruki that he feared a decisive battle. The Prince returned to the allied camp, proclaiming that he had seen the French army "on the brink of destruction," thus sweeping away the last remnant of discretion which still remained to Alexander.⁸ Without consulting his ally, the Tsar

⁵ *Corr.*, XI, no. 9524.

⁶ Full text in Driault, *Napoléon et l'Europe: Austerlitz*, p. 266.

⁷ De Ségur, *Histoire et mémoires, 1789-1842* (1872), II, 448.

⁸ A French or Bavarian agent in St Petersburg reported on December 31: "En rendant compte de sa mission à l'Empereur Alexandre, il [Dolgoruki] a fait tout ce qu'il a pu pour l'aigrir et de concert avec Bagration, il lui a dit:

now adopted an extravagant plan of battle, drawn up by the Austrian General Weyrother and calculated to result in the annihilation of the French army. The Russians set up only those premises which were agreeable to them and left chance and Napoleon entirely out of their considerations. That the French Emperor was as well acquainted with the true status of the situation as his opponents were not, is apparent from every move which was taken in preparation of the battle. In a magnificently audacious address on the eve of the conflict he calmly predicted what he and the enemy would do on the morrow.⁹ That such supreme self-confidence raised the spirit of his soldiers to exaltation is not surprising.

The next day witnessed the appropriate celebration of the anniversary of the imperial coronation. The corps of Davout and Bernadotte had been called up from Vienna, thus raising the strength of the army to about 68,000 men. While Davout held the right against the Russian onslaught, Soult charged in the center the heights of Pratzen, which the enemy had purposely been allowed to occupy. The brave stand of the Russian Imperial Guard was finally overcome by a charge of the French Guards, and the allied army broke in utter rout. Thus ended the battle of the three emperors, a military triumph equaled only by the political one which made it possible.

The fruits of the seemingly overwhelming victory had still to be secured with energy, skill, and considerable bluff. It had been evident during the negotiations which had been going on under Talleyrand's direction at Vienna that all parties were awaiting developments. The wily minister had been ordered to extend the conferences without regard to time.¹⁰ He was actually driven to mark time by being left without adequate in-

'Si Votre Majesté recule, Bonaparte nous prendrait pour des laches.' *'Des laches!'* répondit l'Empereur avec véhémence, 'plutôt mourir!' Ce fut le moment où la bataille se décida. Czartoryski et Novosiltzov mêmes asseyèrent en vain de le dissuader; il leur a répondu avec un mouvement d'humeur, ce n'était point une affaire ministérielle." A.E., BAVIÈRE, 181, no. 261.

⁹ À l'armée, Dec. 1, *Corr.*, XI, no. 9533.

¹⁰ "Vous devez traiter la question doucement et longuement." *Corr.*, XI, no. 9523.

structions, probably because Napoleon knew too well his predilection for an arrangement by which the Austrians would be let off easily.¹¹ Both the Austrian and the Prussian plenipotentiaries here played into Napoleon's hand, Talleyrand reporting that the former appeared to regard their interviews "more as conversations than as conferences."¹² Haugwitz was even more anxious to remain inactive than the others. His only answers to the exhortations of Stadion and Giulay were vague assurances that the Treaty of Potsdam would be executed, though he did not trouble to hide from them that he no longer considered himself in a position to demand Mantua and the line of the Mincio for Austria. To Frederick William he wrote that Napoleon could and would make peace with Austria the moment Prussia declared against him, and that it would be necessary to proceed with caution and treat the French ambassador with more courtesy; in short, his advice was to do nothing until the result of the pending battle was known.¹³ Haugwitz himself carried politeness to the point of never appearing in the streets of Vienna without the grand cordon of the Legion of Honor conspicuously displayed on the outside of his coat. To Talleyrand Haugwitz described the Convention of Potsdam as "a simple declaration," a mere offer of "good offices and mediation," and of little importance to France.¹⁴ He practically apologized for the harsh treatment accorded Duroc and Laforest, promised that Prussia would oppose an invasion of Holland from North Germany, and acknowledged the sovereignty of France over Hanover by right of conquest.¹⁵ The envoy probably made these promises and declarations only to

¹¹ Talleyrand during these days constantly implores the Emperor to inform him of his intentions. Cf. Beitand, *Lettres inédites*, pp. 201, 202, 204.

¹² To Napoleon, Dec. 1. *Ibid.*, p. 203.

¹³ Report of Dec. 2. Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, no. 311.

¹⁴ When the Austrian envoys spoke of the Convention of Potsdam to Talleyrand, the Minister interrupted them and called it a simple declaration. "Il [Talleyrand] s'explique après que M. de Haugwitz le lui avoit dit ainsi sans lui faire part de la teneur de ces instruments, lesquels il avoit toute un être d'un contenu peu important pour la France." Stadion and Giulay to Cobenzl, Dec. 2. A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 27, no. 107.

¹⁵ Talleyrand to Napoleon, Dec. 2. Bertrand, *Lettres inédites*, pp. 205-208.

gain time, forgetting that Prussia might be held liable for them if the French were victorious.

The day after Austerlitz, Napoleon hastily dictated a letter to his foreign minister, announcing that all previous negotiations were nullified, since they had never been entered into seriously by the Austrians. Talleyrand was to inform Stadion that Austria's attempt to pull the wool over the Emperor's eyes had failed; that he had discerned her true intentions and had therefore sent her envoys away from Brünn.¹⁶

But Napoleon was far from anxious to drive Austria to desperation. The haste of Emperor Francis to arrive at a peace settlement now stood him in good stead. Referring to his master's desire to join the army in November, 1801, Thugut had said to Lord Minto: "If any considerable disaster should happen, no power on earth could restrain him in the moment of alarm from some weak or precipitate measure."¹⁷ This prophecy was now fully justified. Francis asked Napoleon for an interview, which the latter immediately granted. The two monarchs met on December 4 to discuss the terms of an armistice. Napoleon spoke in a most gracious manner with the defeated sovereign, promising to preserve him in all his territories if the Russians would also make peace and close their ports to the British. Otherwise Austria would have to renounce Tyrol and Venetia. At the urgent pleas of Francis, he finally consented to leave him Tyrol. On December 6 the armistice was signed, centering about three main points: first, the retreat of the Russians within fifteen days; second, Austria's guarantee that no foreign army should enter her territories; and third, the Austrian promise not to permit an insurrection or levée en masse in Hungary.¹⁸

The Tsar was only too glad to desert his ally to return to Russia. His army had not yet recovered from its panic, fear

¹⁶ Dec. 3. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9540.

¹⁷ Minto, *Life and Letters*, III, 180.

¹⁸ Complete text in Neumann, *Recueil des traités . . . conclus par l'Autriche*, II, 181-182.

of pursuit and annihilation having broken all disciplinary bonds. Francis had offered to fight on if his ally would stand by him, but the Tsar would neither consent to peace nor stay with Austria. Though incapable of coming to grips with his enemy without the coöperation of one of the German powers, he remained officially at war.

To separate Prussia from her Austrian connection was rather more difficult. Once sure of her, Napoleon could impose any settlement he wished on the Danube monarchy.¹⁹ One is rather surprised to learn that Frederick William, after receiving the news of the disaster of Austerlitz, not only refused to desert the coalition, but evidenced greater determination than one would have believed him capable of. Colonel Phull was sent to the allied sovereigns to arrive at a common plan of action with them. Haugwitz received orders to regard the convention of November 3 as his guiding instructions, paying no attention to altered circumstances unless so ordered by the two emperors, to whose commands he was to submit himself in every respect. Alexander was notified that Napoleon's offer to accept the Prussian mediation in return for a guarantee of Holland was rejected, that the Prussian armies had been ordered to move upon the French by the most direct route, and that Phull was authorized to represent his master in concerting a new plan of operations.²⁰ Frederick William thus submitted himself entirely to the dictates of his allies — the blame for the abandonment of the struggle must rest upon them.

Meanwhile the superiority of the French publicity service was taking effect. The Austrian and Russian legations were left entirely without information by their governments, while Laforest received continuous notes and bulletins, in which the successes of Napoleon naturally were not underrated. Metter-

¹⁹ "Sûr de la Prusse, l'Autriche en passera par où je voudrai." To Talleyrand, Dec. 14. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9573.

²⁰ Frederick William to Alexander, Dec. 10. Bailleu, *Briefwechsel*, no. 86; Metternich to Colloredo, Dec. 10; Crenneville to Cobenzl, Dec. 11. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Dec.), fol. 79-80.

nich was in a fearful state of mind, for the French party again made itself heard, and the silence of the allied embassies gave its insinuations free play. The King and Hardenberg were noticeably affected when Haugwitz reported on the interview between Napoleon and Francis and the formulation of an armistice. Metternich, Alopeus, and Crenneville implored Hardenberg to stand firm, the Austrians giving him the positive assurance that their sovereign would not enter into a separate peace. They received the promise that the military preparations would proceed without a halt, but Haugwitz was now ordered to refrain from committing himself until he had received new instructions.²¹ General Stutterheim, the representative of Emperor Francis, finally arrived at Berlin on December 16 and was astonished beyond measure to find the Prussians in such good disposition. In his interview with the King the monarch complained bitterly of having been left without information, that all he knew about the battle of Austerlitz and its consequences had come from the French. He said that he still regarded Austria's cause as his own, but demanded a frank disclosure of any negotiations for a separate peace. Stutterheim admitted that such were being carried on, but excused them on the plea of Austria's isolation. He broke into bitter complaints against the Russians, the justice of which the King freely admitted.²² Finally he betrayed the real object of his mission, that of persuading the Prussians to mass their troops on the Bohemian frontier so as to incline Napoleon to easier terms of peace. Such a proposal was of course entirely inadmissible, for it would have concentrated Napoleon's resentment on Prussia alone. The King, however, assured the envoy that if his sovereign would pledge himself not to conclude a

²¹ Metternich to Colloredo, Dec. 13; Crenneville to Cobenzl, Dec. 13. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Dec.), fol. 99-101.

²² Frederick William shared the view of many contemporaries that alliance with Russia would ever be precarious, as she might always retire from the war on the slightest pretext. He expressed this view to Merveldt, who had come to Berlin in September. Merveldt to Colloredo, Sept. 22, 1805. *Ibid.*, 82 (Sept.), fol. 102-105.

separate peace or if he would inform him in what manner he was willing to coöperate in the operations against the French should Napoleon's conditions be unacceptable, Prussia would join Austria with all her forces.²³

On December 17 Prince Dolgoruki, who had been entrusted with a letter from the Tsar, arrived in the Prussian capital after a voyage which for deliberate slowness can be compared only to that of Haugwitz to Brünn.²⁴ Alexander informed his now disillusioned ally of the defeat of Austerlitz and his determination to return to Russia: "I hope that by the wisdom of your determinations, Sire, you will succeed in arriving at an arrangement with France." If the King cared to continue the war, the corps of Tolstoy and Bennigsen, then in Silesia, would be placed at his disposal.²⁵ It is truly a subject for amazement that in spite of this final blow Frederick William did not as yet renounce the idea of coöperating with the powers of the coalition. He immediately replied to the Tsar's communication with the assertion that if the allies would stand firm, he was still prepared to concert with them on what measures could yet be adopted.²⁶ But the decision no longer remained in the hands of the cabinet of Berlin, for it had already fallen at Vienna.

By the interception of the reports of Stadion and Giulay from November 29 to December 2, Napoleon had acquired exact knowledge of the aims of the court of Vienna as well as of the very strained relationship between the Austrian plenipotentiaries and Haugwitz. The remarks credited to the Prussian concerning his interview with the Emperor were hardly of such a nature as to win him the favor of the latter, but they confirmed Napoleon's conviction of the uncertainty of the policy of the court of Berlin. Now that Haugwitz was informed of the

²³ Stutterheim to Cobenzl, Dec. 16. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Dec.), fol. 123-126.

²⁴ Thus Dolgoruki delayed four days at Breslau in order to supply himself with the attire he considered necessary for his appearance at the court of Berlin. Gentz to Paget, Dec. 17, 1805. *Paget Papers*, II, 257.

²⁵ Dec. 6. Bailleu, *Briefwechsel*, no. 84.

²⁶ Dec. 17. *Ibid.*, no. 87.

armistice and the negotiations for a separate peace, he was placed in a particularly helpless position. In a memorandum, which had been approved by the King and by Hardenberg, he had said of the approaching negotiations:

It remains to be considered that the court of Vienna, reduced to the last extremity, may conclude a separate peace. . . . In such a case it would be necessary, I believe, to redouble my efforts to calm the anger which the Emperor of the French will have conceived because of the armaments of Prussia, and which would then explode with double force. It would above all else be necessary to gain time.²⁷

Thus Haugwitz was bound to consider the obligations of Prussia at an end if Austria should treat for a separate peace. By mingling threats with cajolery in that manner of which he was such a master Napoleon was able to induce him to sign the notorious Treaty of Schönbrunn, by which Prussia was firmly bound to the chariot wheels of the conqueror. Deserted by everybody and intimidated by a huge army of occupation, Austria was then obliged to submit to any settlement which Napoleon chose to impose upon her. In the hope of better terms she tried to delay, and Archduke Charles asked the French Emperor for an interview. Napoleon fixed it for December 27, at the same time urging Talleyrand to hurry the conclusion of the treaty.²⁸ On the same day that he met the gallant Austrian the Treaty of Pressburg was signed, by the terms of which Venetia, Istria, and Dalmatia were ceded to the Kingdom of Italy; Tyrol, Trent, and Brixen to Bavaria; and the Hapsburg possessions in Swabia to Württemberg.²⁹ For the time being Austria was relegated to the second rank of powers.

Austerlitz was the second decisive battle in the career of Napoleon Bonaparte. Marengo had assured his position as ruler of France — Austerlitz ratified the great expansive movement of the four intervening years and assured him the dom-

²⁷ Hardenberg, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, II, 188-189.

²⁸ Dec. 23. *Corr.*, XI, no. 9613.

²⁹ Neumann, *Recueil des traités . . . conclus par l'Autriche*, II, 183.

inating rôle in Western Europe. The period following the Peace of Luneville and preceding that of Amiens had witnessed the first definite application of a new Napoleonic policy. It was then that the great Corsican's diplomacy began to manifest imperialistic leanings, after having been, at least outwardly, nationalistic. Even before the Amiens treaty had received its final form, France had secured a dominating influence in Italy and South Germany. Her control over Italy she owed to the policy of maintaining partially organized republics, who knew that their preservation depended entirely upon her protection. But the First Consul had made this relationship a personal one by taking over the government of the most important of these states. By his mediation in the matter of the German indemnities he had acquired the right of interfering in the affairs of the Holy Roman Empire, had destroyed the preponderance of Austria in Germany, and had laid the basis of a powerful clientele of princes.

But the advance of France in all directions was not the result of a calculated system of aggression. Bonaparte, the child of the Revolution, had made himself heir to the claims of the old monarchy, and the favorable situation which had resulted from the victories of the French armies and the division among the powers made it possible to realize upon them in a manner hitherto unknown in modern history. The old European state system had been destroyed by the partition of Poland and the success of France in gaining her natural boundaries. At a time when the social as well as the political order was in a state of flux the balance of power had been rudely overthrown, and it was a natural consequence that the strongest should reap the harvest. The fact that the personality of Bonaparte added energy and impetus to French activity does not justify the assumption that it can be ascribed exclusively to him. France herself had shown marked imperialistic tendencies during various periods of her history, and particularly so during the Revolution; as yet he was no more than their supreme personification. The diplomatic defeat of England in the nego-

tiations at London and at Amiens gave France a freer hand upon the Continent than she had ever enjoyed before, and the First Consul took full advantage of the liberty of action accorded him.

It is a question of much interest and speculation whether Napoleon recognized any limits to his advance at the time of the Amiens settlement, whether his system, as Talleyrand so often tried to reassure anxious powers, was "*complètement arrêté*." After the autumn of 1802 his expansive activity did in fact come to a halt. France needed repose and reconstruction, and she had realized to the full upon her opportunities as far as the Continent was concerned. But Napoleon, as General Dupont once said of him, always had to have at least one project with which to play and occupy himself. Probably without any intention of immediate action, he turned his eyes toward the Near East, speculated upon the possibility of aggrandizement in this direction, and was imprudent enough to divulge his views to Russia and to threaten England. The latter, who from the first had been determined to secure an eventual revision of the unsatisfactory Amiens settlement, was quick to take advantage of his error, and as he was extremely sensitive regarding the maintenance of his prestige, the renewal of the conflict, which he would have preferred to postpone for several years, became inevitable.

The war with England, although involving the destruction of her reviving colonial empire and overseas trade, again drove France beyond her boundaries. Hanover and Naples, England's two chief points of contact with the Continent, were occupied, and her trade excluded from the Baltic to the Adriatic. The collision of French and Russian interests in the Ottoman Empire, however, served to estrange the two countries, and Europe began to align herself for a struggle which would result in the recognition or destruction of the continental domination of France. Here Napoleonic diplomacy was confronted with a difficult task if it wished to retain its objectives. The already tremendous power which he had been able to concentrate in

his hands was not sufficient to encounter the united strength of Europe, so that it became essential to assure himself of the alliance or neutrality of at least one of the major German states. It would be superfluous to recapitulate the reasons for his choice of Prussia. The alliance of the North German power Napoleon was unable to obtain, for he could not reconcile himself to the restrictions which such a connection would have entailed; but he did succeed in gaining her promise not to join a hostile combination against him.

The renewal of the war with England had given Napoleon a pretext for extending his control in Germany and Italy, but he was content to go no further as long as there remained any prospect for the successful invasion of the island kingdom. The project of the descent played the major rôle in his policy for a large part of the year 1804 and from February, 1805, down to the very last days of August. With its failure Napoleon was placed in the vicious circle which eventually led to his ruin. In order to equalize the inevitable advantage of his enemy on the seas and in the colonies, he was forced to maintain his offensive upon the Continent; but as the tentacles of his power spread over Europe, they provided the bases for further coalitions until the magnificent edifice he had built up collapsed of its own weight.

Both Napoleon and Talleyrand realized that France had arrived at the crossroads in 1805. But their difference of opinion regarding the course to be pursued in future portended the dissolution of their political partnership.³⁰ After Austerlitz Talleyrand again appealed to the Emperor to maintain the Austrian monarchy as a "mass necessary to the future safety of civilized nations," but the Treaty of Schönbrunn made it impossible for him to soften that with the Court of Vienna.³¹ It has often been said that by directing the Danube state toward

³⁰ This is also the view of Émile Dard, who sees in Talleyrand's manner of urging his views an "ultimatum" the rejection of which made an early parting of the ways inevitable. *Napoléon et Talleyrand*, p. 106

³¹ Talleyrand, *Mémoires*, I, 302; Talleyrand to Napoleon, Dec. 5, 1805. Bertrand, *Lettres inédites*, p. 209

the East he offered the only solution which could promise permanence. The idea was not new and has often been brought forward since. It was quite consistent with the theories of Herzberg in 1787 and with the "système hongroise" of which Montgelas spoke to Otto in 1804. For a time it was part of the program of Napoleon III, and Bismarck finally succeeded in bringing it to realization after the Congress of Berlin. But one cannot straightway assume that it was applicable in 1805; it is indeed possible that Napoleon had a more just appreciation of the actual situation than did his minister. Austria had shown little inclination to renounce her pretensions in Italy and Germany, was very much afraid of Russia, and would be difficult to reconcile to being exiled to the confines of Europe.

Nor was the Emperor blind to the grandeur and vision of Talleyrand's great scheme, especially as a reserve principle for future policy. At Pressburg he hinted to the Austrian plenipotentiaries that he was ready to coöperate with their sovereign in oriental expansion if the Ottoman Empire broke up, and throughout 1806 he directed the attention of the cabinet of Vienna to the significance of Russia's position in the Near East. If his favorite plan of an eventual alliance with Russia should prove unattainable,³² or if that alliance should turn out to be unsatisfactory, it was always possible to return to Talleyrand's idea of a revival of the connection of 1756.

In regard to Napoleon's relation to Prussia the campaign of 1805 also represents a turning point. Up to the autumn of 1805 he had made every effort to win her alliance and friendship. In the Treaty of Schönbrunn he secured the former, but renounced all claims to the latter. Whether it was because of resentment at her short-lived alliance with his enemies, which he regarded in the light of treachery, or because his views of

³² On December 14, having just persuaded Haugwitz to ally Prussia with France, Napoleon, apparently in an exuberant and communicative mood, revealed to him his cherished design: "La Russie, je l'aurai, non pas aujourd'hui, mais dans un an, dans deux, dans trois ans d'ici. Le temps passe l'éponge sur tous les souvenirs, et ce serait peut-être de toutes les alliances celle qui me conviendrait le plus." Report of Haugwitz, Dec. 26, 1805. Hardenberg, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, V, 233.

aggrandizement had taken another direction than heretofore, it was evident from now on that there would sooner or later be a collision between the French Emperor and the court of Berlin. Napoleon seems to have sincerely believed for a time that the sympathies of the Prussians were on his side, and he could not forgive being disillusioned.

Probably the most far-reaching result of the overthrow of the Third Coalition was the erection of a definite French hegemony in Germany. The shadow empire was permitted to exist a few months longer, so that the preparations for its burial might go on without being disturbed. Many Germans had come to believe that if, with France and Italy, they could find an Emperor in Napoleon, the Empire of the West would be re-established and could lay down the law to the rest of the world. At the opening of the campaign of 1805 Archchancellor Dalberg had recognized its significance for Germany. According to Hédouville, he had shortly before maintained that Emperor Francis ought to abdicate and that it would be best for the German Empire to offer the crown to the only ruler worthy of making it respected, Napoleon. But the unstable primate was so shaken by the French successes that he issued an appeal to the Diet to preserve the imperial constitution.³³ After Austerlitz, however, Dalberg gave way completely and resigned himself to a reorganization of Germany on any basis suggested by Napoleon.³⁴ Baden, Bavaria, Hesse-Darmstadt, and Württemberg had already endorsed the idea of a federation under French protection. The immediate nobility, the last support of the imperial system, was now ruthlessly suppressed, Napoleon ordering his generals to assist the princes in taking over their territories,³⁵ his attention having been

³³ Complete text in K. Beaulieu-Marconnay, *Karl von Dalberg und seine Zeit* (1879), II, 37-41.

³⁴ "Votre Majesté a prouvé que ses armées sont plus rapides que les délibérations de la diète, et qu'il lui est plus facile de gagner une bataille qu'à archichancelier de rédiger une lettre déhortatoire." Dalberg to Napoleon, Dec. 18, 1805. Driault, *Napoléon et l'Europe: Austerlitz*, p. 359.

³⁵ Ordre de jour, Dec. 19, 1805. Picard and Tuetey, *Correspondance inédite*, I, no. 237.

called to the success of Austria in the two previous years in buying up whole counties in Swabia in exchange for Bohemian estates, which offered an increased income.³⁶ Henceforth the Napoleonic system in Germany was based exclusively on the secondary states.

The substitution of the Gregorian for the Republican calendar on January 1, 1806, may be considered symbolical of the commencement of a new era. Napoleon had realized on the legacies of the old monarchy and of the Revolution, and from now on the individual and dynastic element predominates in his policy. No longer can we regard the Emperor simply as the crowned head of a great republic. His task of bringing to completion the more permanent achievements of the Revolution was largely done, and a Carolingian system takes the place of what remained of a national one. The Empire was accepted as an institution of probable permanence both within France and in Western Europe generally. "The French people as a nation," says Fournier, "were far too proud, too vain, not to lay claim to a man who gave commands to monarchs, who made and unmade kings, and through whom the name of France had been exalted beyond any point ever reached under her former rulers."³⁷ In the dispatches of the Austrian diplomats "Bonaparte" at last became "Napoleon," for there now appeared no hope of again demoting him to the former appellation. The much sought family alliances with the princes of South Germany were finally obtained.

But the political edifice which Napoleon now strove to erect lacked stability, for, in the final analysis, its permanence depended upon its ability to adjust itself to the true interests of the French nation. His success up to the War of the Third Coalition had been due as much to his superiority in the diplomatic game as to his military genius. Diplomacy had led up

³⁶ "Coup d'oeil sur les possessions de l'Autriche en Suabe et sur les projets d'aggrandissement de cette contrée"—the work of an unknown member of the foreign department, probably of September, 1805. A.E., AUTRICHE, supplément 27, no. 7.

³⁷ Fournier, *Napoleon the First*, p. 326.

to, made possible, and secured the fruits of the battle of Austerlitz.³⁸ With the exception of the defeat of England, everything which he had fought for since the Peace of Luneville was accomplished. The fate of an isolated and humiliated Austria depended upon his will; a defeated and discredited Russia had suffered greatly in her prestige; a cringing Prussia had been forced to sign an alliance in which all his policies were endorsed. For some time to come the empire which he had built up in Western Europe was secure against attack, and the central and even the eastern portion of the Continent became a field for future expansion. But Napoleonic diplomacy had passed its zenith, for in his increasing concentration upon self he lost much of his statesmanlike outlook. What was permanent in the Napoleonic edifice, such as the regeneration of Germany and Italy, had been built stone by stone before 1805. "After the battle of Austerlitz," declares Chateaubriand, "Bonaparte scarcely committed anything but faults."³⁹ One may hesitate to endorse so sweeping a condemnation, but commencing with his dethronement of the Neapolitan Bourbons, every major political operation henceforth undertaken proved to be disastrous in the end. The incalculable consequences of the battle of the three emperors inaugurated a system based on military prestige alone. It was thus possible for Leipzig and Waterloo to destroy what Marengo and Austerlitz had established.

³⁸ Metternich was quick to recognize the correlation of military and diplomatic arts in the campaign of 1805, which he described as ". . . conduit avec une sagesse diplomatique avec des efforts militaires qui tenoient de prodige." To Colloredo, Nov. 6, 1805. S.-A., PREUSSEN, 82 (Nov.), fol. 21-23.

³⁹ Dreyfus, *Napoléon raconté par Chateaubriand*, pp. 121-122.

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